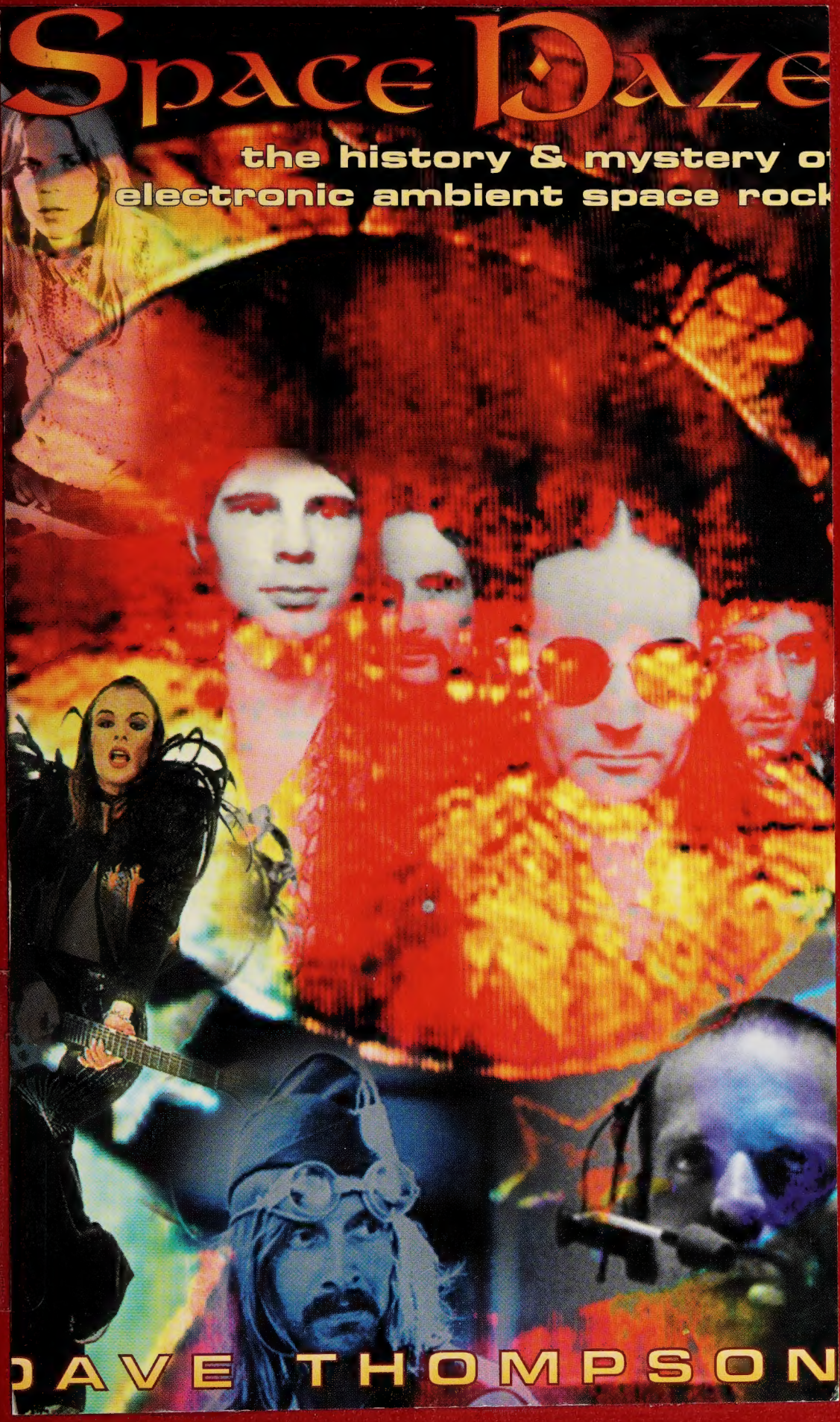
Space Daze

the history & mystery of electronic ambient space rock



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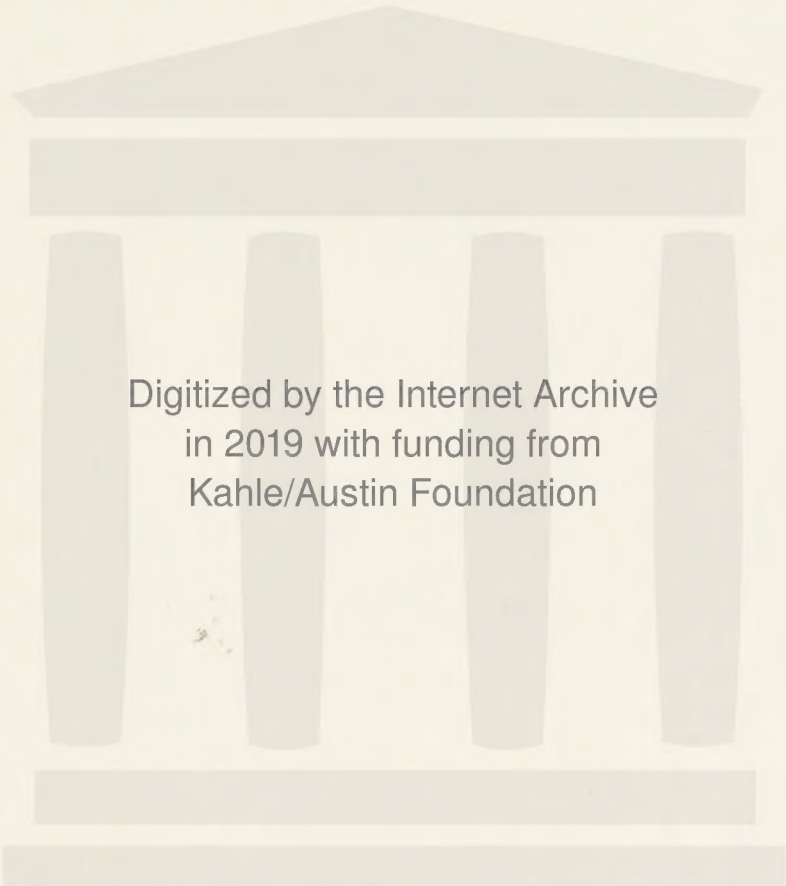
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Space Daze

THE HISTORY AND MYSTERY OF ELECTRONIC AMBIENT SPACE ROCK

by

DAVE THOMPSON

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Space Daze

CHAPTER ONE
The Space Ritual

In the beginning, there was Hawkwind.

Not quite in the very beginning, of course; sundry creation myths notwithstanding, nothing springs from absolutely *nothing*. In terms of Space Rock though, while, without Hawkwind, there would still have been Space and Rock, and maybe some people would have put them together and said "ah, this must be what we mean", Hawkwind was never simply "put together". Neither, though adherents of what we today call Space Rock can argue all night about its ingredients, can they be removed from the equation.

What, after all, is Space Rock? To the earliest Hawkwind fans, who saw the ads in the music press for their first, eponymous, album beneath – yes, beneath the banner SPACE ROCK, it encompassed everything from

the blues-driven throb of "Hurry On Sundown", to the spectral echoes of "Paranoia" (parts one and two, divisible only when you got up to change the record; on CD the break's just an irritant), and on to the full-blooded freak-out of "Seeing It As You Really Are", ten minutes of eerie electronics – except the sounds are all organic, and what you hear whispering, howling and hooting in your head is not necessarily what you have going on in your ears.

Space Rock embraced all these things; Space Rock thus *became* all these things, and it was only later, once other musicians had borrowed its elements, isolated them and developed them as single strands, that maybe the basics became a little blurred.

"If you get the times and the dates right, you'll probably find that the Pink Fairies really were the beginning of Space Rock as it became known," insists Twink, a founding Fairy and occasional Hawkwind drummer. "I believe that strongly, that the Pink Fairies really were the first Space Rock band."

He remembers a particular issue of *Frendz* magazine which headlined a Fairies' interview "Cosmic Rock'n'Roll", "and then the next issue had Hawkwind, and the headline for their story was 'Space Rock'."

But, if the Pink Fairies were Space Rock, where did that leave Tangerine Dream? And if you consider Gong, can you still count Can? Hawkwind have the answers, for Hawkwind encountered the questions before their critics were even questioning.

"Originally, we just wanted to freak people out," Dave Brock admitted in 1971. "We used to portray different trips, and because of our own experiences, we knew exactly how to get through to people." When they played "Paranoia", one review claimed, "people either pass out, freak out, or run out screaming."

Maybe the *International Times (IT)* got it right, back at the dawn of Hawkwind's career. "The mood's the thing, and Hawkwind are superb at creating an atmosphere. They've often been compared to the Pink Floyd, which is perhaps unfair, as Hawkwind are basically funkier than the Floyd have ever been. Also, they have a sense of humor that Waters and company seem to lack – musically at least."

It was that ability, that funkiness, and that humor, which allowed Hawkwind to get away with all that they did. Saxophonist Nik Turner was a free jazzman, whose head had been turned by the freak form cacophony of the German commune band Amon Düül.

Guitarist Dave Brock was a former busker, rooted in a bluesiness which never permitted him to stray too far from rock'n'roll.

Electronics wizard Dikmik, who joined midway between Hawkwind's first and second albums, was a former drummer, so he understood the vitality of rhythm, even if no-one understood what he did with it. Work

on that second album was delayed while Dikmik awaited delivery of his first moog synthesizer.

"If we don't get it together soon, we'll be left behind," Dikmik sighed. "We've had these ideas for months, and now Keith Emerson and that King Crimson bloke are going to get one. Unless we're careful, they'll do what we've been wanting to do."

There was little danger of that.

Other musicians came and went, a curse which Hawkwind have since grown to relish. Original bassist John Harrison was replaced by Thomas Crimble from festival favorites Skin Alley; by the time of Hawkwind's second album, *In Search of Space*, he'd already stepped aside for Amon Düül II's Dave Anderson.

First album guitarist Huw Lloyd Langton went out one day in 1970 and didn't come back for another eleven years. Drummer Terry Ollis fucked his arm up doing acid one day, was replaced on different occasions by Twink and the Pretty Things' Viv Prince, came back feeling better, was joined for a short time by second drummer Simon House, and then quit altogether.

Dikmik left, and Hawkwind's soundman, Del Dettmar, replaced him. When Dikmik returned, Dettmar stayed on as well. There was no room for ego in Hawkwind, and when it did finally raise its head one day, the solution was simple.

"Dave Anderson started turning up to gigs in his sports car, while the rest of us lived and traveled in a van," Dave Brock remembered. The group began plotting his downfall... not least of all because a sports car was somewhat airier than a bright yellow British Rail parcels van full of clothes and smelly socks. "Blow up his car!" Brock suggested.

"No, beat him up!" cackled Dikmik.

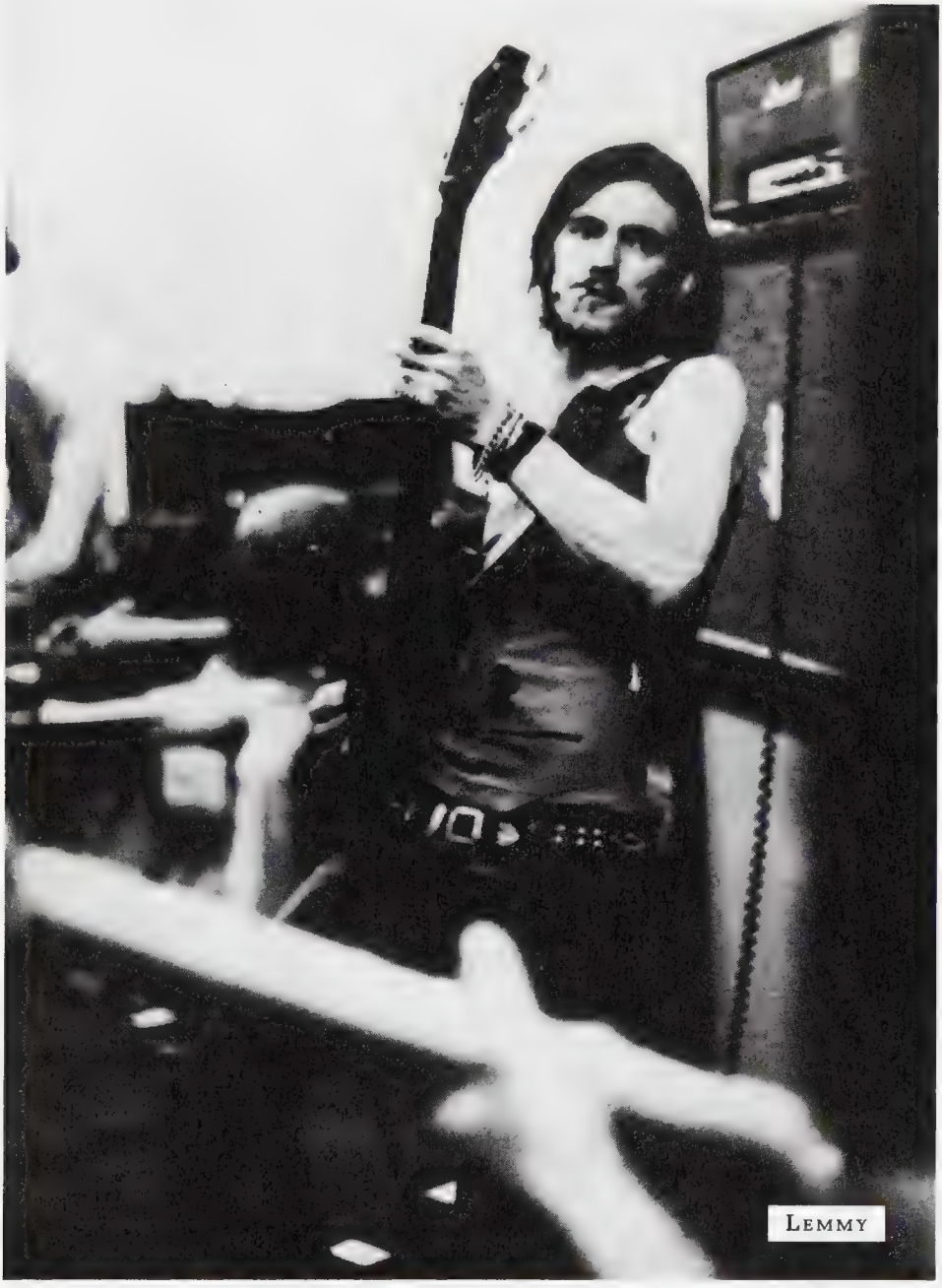
"Push him down stairs!"

"Throw him off a building!"

In the end, the band just made life so uncomfortable for Anderson that he quit, and in came Dikmik's flatmate, a speed freak bassist named Ian Kilminster, *aka* Lemmy the Lurch.

Lemmy had quite the musical past, passing from beat boom hopefuls the Rockin' Vicars, through Sam Gopal's Dream, a tangled mass of Indian tablas and Lemmy's Chuck Berry-isms, and on to the dying flutterings of Opal Butterfly, a band which managed to combine the worst of Vanilla Fudge with the worst of Iron Butterfly, but at their best still retain a smidgeon of period charm.

He had roadied for Hendrix on the tour he headlined over Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd and Davey O'List's the Nice, and he had an appetite for pills which left the rest of Hawkwind at the starting post. At least, that was the rumor. Another one reckons the rest of Hawkwind weren't



LEMMY

sure if he should join them or not, and only let him in on six months' probation. He ended up staying for close to five years.

In Search of Space, the second Hawkwind album (recorded while Dave Anderson was still in the band), was released in 1971. In an age of elaborate packaging – Roger Dean was turning out his first floating islands for Yes; Amon Düül II were showing the view from a space rocket's flight deck – *In Search of Space* took no prisoners. Within designer Barney Bubbles' oddly cut gatefold sleeve lay 42 minutes of

music, and a flight log which rocketed from six days out in 1970 to the crystal grasslands of 19th century Venus, the burned out husk of late 1980s' earth, and thereafter, into infinity.

"We have been through so many time storms and warps in the fabric of reality that the purpose of our journey has long been lost to memory," the weary Captain noted, 24 hours after (but some 1,500 years before) his final words echoed through the hold of his craft... "Technicians of spaceship earth... this is your Captain speaking. Your Captain is dead." If the reader read at just the right speed, he could lay the log down as the last chords of the last song, "Children of the Sun" faded from earshot. *This* is our inheritance.

Like its predecessor, *Space* was recorded live in the studio, Brock simply delivering an idea or a riff, and the rest of the band building from there. "We were taking a lot of LSD at the time," says Nik Turner. "It helped."

There was no time for retakes, but more importantly, there was no need for them. Hawkwind's reputation was forged outside the studio, at free concerts for the inmates of Wormwood Scrubs prison, outside the gates at the Isle of Wight and Bath festivals, anywhere they could set up and play... that, after all, was how they started life in the first place.

"When I first met the guys who formed the band – Dave Brock, Mick Slattery and a couple of others," recalls Turner, "I was working in Holland on a rock'n'roll circus called Tent '67. They had a band called Dr Brock's Famous Cure, which played in the tent."

Turner was working as a roustabout at the time, but he kept in touch, and when the others began discussing forming a new band, Turner offered to become their road manager, "because I had a van, a green Ford Thames. Then I went to their first rehearsal and said 'oh, I've got my sax with me'; they said 'let's hear you play'... they thought it was wonderful, so I was immediately in the band."

It was later that same evening that Group X – as the band hurriedly christened itself – played its first gig, at All Saints Hall in Notting Hill, on January 28th, 1970. "It was put on by Clearwater productions, which was organized by Doug Smith. We just went down and barnstormed it.

"[DJ] John Peel was at the gig, Trees were playing, Skin Alley and High Tide. They said we could play for ten minutes before the first band went on – so we quickly fumbled our equipment together, then jumped on the stage and played." Group X's "set" comprised one completely improvised jam, "Sunshine Special" ("which we had actually worked out at the rehearsal") "and John Peel loved it. He told Clearwater they should manage us, so they did!" Peel subsequently invited Hawkwind to record two sessions for his BBC radio show in September 1970 and April 1971.

Working quickly, Smith secured Hawkwind a deal with United

Artists, a label which was then just beginning to make its mark on both the UK and the German underground.

Andrew Lauder was the A&R man responsible for many of UA's most pioneering signings. "Andrew was pretty open-minded," Turner enthuses. "He traveled around, was very *au fait* with the American scene, and I think he saw what we were doing as akin to what was going on over there, and was therefore worth backing. He was very much in touch with

DAVE BROCK

what was current!"

Group X became Hawkwind Zoo became Hawkwind, but their philosophy never wavered – free shows and long jams. "We were doing a lot of gigs where we actually lost money," Turner smiles. "We'd do any gig we could get, benefits, support slots, free things, anything really."

If their financial sense was poor, however, Hawkwind's reputation could only profit. "We had a reputation for playing until the plugs were pulled on us," says Del Dettmar. "So a lot of times, the headline band would want to go on first, get it over with and not have to worry about us. People would then come along, see us going on last, and think we were the headliners. That really helped build up the name!"

When they couldn't get on last, Hawkwind found other ways to upstage the show. When the Grateful Dead made their UK debut, in an horrifically muddy field near Wigan, Hawkwind showered the sodden audience with goose feathers! And it was very rare that anyone ever turned the tables back on them.

One band which did succeed in putting one over on Hawkwind, coincidentally enough, was Coum Transmissions, the anarchic, near-freeform band led by a young Genesis P Orridge – a quarter of a century later, an integral part of Nik Turner's *Prophets of Time* album.

"It was the age of the giant drum kits," P Orridge smirks, "when every band had to have a bigger kit than everyone else. We were playing this free festival in northern England somewhere, Hawkwind were going on immediately after us. And they had a huge drum kit. We started playing our set, with just a normal sized kit, then roadies started bringing out more drums, and just setting them up around it. More drums, and more, until the kit took up the entire stage, our drummer was leaping around trying to reach the furthest ones, and the audience was just sitting there watching, and going – 'wha???'!"

Brock told *Melody Maker*, "When a concert is for free, you get good vibrations because no-one has paid to see you. You are on the same level as the audience, the only difference being that you are playing the guitar, and not them."

"To some degree," Turner agrees, "the free gigs were conducive to the band's success, the fact we made ourselves available to do just about any gig really. If anybody in the band deemed it a worthwhile course, then we would do it, however incompetently it might have been organized... we'd usually try to get our expenses, but very often we didn't even get them! But that didn't really matter at the time... it was just exciting being on the scene, being part of it, and being able to help people."

Although necessity eventually caused Hawkwind to draw back a little from the free festival arena, particularly after they became renowned for the sheer scale of their live performances (and corresponding

overheads), they maintained their links with the circuit. In the space of 24 hours in 1975, for instance, the band went from headlining the annual Reading Festival, at six pounds a ticket, to the Watchfield free concert, in the shadow of Stonehenge.

Stonehenge has become synonymous with Hawkwind. Nik Turner claims to have played there ever since the modern festivals began there during the early 1970s – "I chanced upon the first one, which was encouraged and publicized by Radio Caroline; I was passing Stonehenge and there were all these people there, sitting around the stones smoking chillums and getting wrecked."

According to Dikmik, Jimi Hendrix intended appearing there alongside Hawkwind in 1971 – "he agreed to it... the day before he died."

Nobody doubted the story – there was something about Hawkwind, stone free and unfettered, which appealed to Hendrix the moment he met them, outside the gates of the 1970 Isle of Wight festival (for as long as the gates still stood – by the end of the weekend, says DJ Andy Dunkley, "they were basically playing just outside the main stage arena") where they and the Pink Fairies were protesting the high cost of admission – three pounds ($15) for three days of music.

The Pink Fairies were the driving force behind the protest; according to Twink, "we'd got friendly with Hawkwind, although mainly with Nik, because we were living in Ladbroke Grove, and Nik was around there as well. We told Hawkwind about the festival and Nik, and twisted the rest of the band's arms to get them down there.

"We knew the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind had to be at the Isle of Wight," says Twink. "We'd gone down there in advance to suss the scene out, to look at the layout of the Festival site. It was the time of the White Panthers, which we were very much part of, we were very anti-music business, so we went down there with the intention of trying to turn it into a free festival, and while it obviously turned out to be too big for us to do that, we did stage an alternative festival."

Still reeling from the effects of an acid-spiked apple juice, Hawkwind guitarist Huw Lloyd Langton remembers, "our performance must have been awful." Turner and Brock used to tune up to Langton's guitar, "but I thought I'd been transported to another planet, and I couldn't get my tuning together because all the notes wavered." He ended the show on his knees, praying.

Turner wasn't too concerned. He was having the time of his life, posing for the myriad press cameras which had descended upon the tiny Isle of Wight. With his hair in plaits and silver stars punctuating his already gaudy clothing, his face painted silver to match, Turner was hard to miss. Hendrix dedicated one song to him, "to the cat with the silver face", and after his set, sat in with the band for a smoke. They tried to get

him to jam with them, too, but his own set had been too miserable for that. Hendrix simply promised to keep in touch. A month later, he was dead.

A more lasting friendship was struck up between Turner and an onlooker named Stacia. Like most of the Isle of Wight audience, she'd never heard of Hawkwind, and Turner's attempts to chat her up made no visible impression. But she obviously remembered the band's name, because when Hawkwind played a festival alongside St Michael's Mount in Cornwall, there she was again.

She asked if she could dance on stage; Nik told her she'd have to remove her clothes first. Stacia promptly stripped, and whenever Hawkwind played around her home town of Exeter, she'd be there for an encore. Soon, Stacia was appearing at most Hawkwind shows, and had been accepted into the band. And though such terminology seemed at odds with Hawkwind's philosophies – "accepted into the band" is such a *rockist* term! – as 1971 progressed, Hawkwind's own attitudes were changing.

"Personally I'm surprised we've got so far," Nik Turner admitted as Hawkwind prepared to record their third album. "I never thought our music would appeal to anybody, simply because we've never pandered to public taste, never compromised, and just played exactly what we wanted. By a happy accident, people seem to dig it."

A quarter of a century later, he confirmed, "I had no expectations; I never *hoped* the band would become successful; it was just nice that it was as successful as it was, and that we were able to turn people on like that – people seemed to be very receptive to it."

The reasons for that weren't hard to determine. Hawkwind, *IT* noted approvingly, "are a community band... strongly rooted in the freak sub-culture of Ladbroke Grove and Notting Hill. Like the Pink Fairies, [they] provide some alternative to the vast numbers of irrelevant, uncommitted rock bands."

Hawkwind and the Pink Fairies, then, were brothers from birth, not only playing on the same bills together, but also sharing the same stage... Pinkwind, an *ad hoc* amalgam of the two bands, became as much a freak show institution as either of the parent groups, to the extent that more than twenty years later, in 1994, Nik Turner and Twink are still able to team up with sundry ex-members of both bands, to perform typically dazzling shows to archetypically dazed audiences.

"I really believe that without the Pink Fairies, and the Pinkwind connection, Hawkwind wouldn't have made it," insists Twink. It was the Fairies, after all, who all but introduced the nascent Hawkwind to what was to become their audience; the Fairies, too, whose lead Hawkwind followed when it came to publicizing themselves.

"It was completely different, the way we established our name," remembers Twink, "using graffiti and stuff like that; playing free festivals and doing a lot of what we would call charity work now, although it wasn't back then, and believing 100% in what we were doing. We really went out there to rob from the rich and give to the poor, and I think we were just a bit ahead of our time with that concept, because it wasn't until

the Sex Pistols came along that it became acceptable to do that!"

The first major Hawkwind/Fairies show was staged at the Roundhouse, in north London's Chalk Farm district, on December 13th, 1970. The Roundhouse itself was a disused railway building, it had once housed one of the immense turntables which are used to turn locomotives around. But it had stood derelict for much of its century-long life, only to be reborn in 1967 as the home to a host of Happenings... the birthplace of British Space Rock, and a lot more besides.

The interior of the Roundhouse had scarcely changed in the past three years. The electricity supply was still little more than any domestic dwelling might require; the seating arrangements were still rickety and primitive; and the cloying stench of ancient diesel oil still cut through the breath of modern incense and dope.

But the Roundhouse belonged to the underground, and it retained its place in their hearts, long after the underground emerged into daylight. In 1978, Nik Turner even recreated a genuine 60s' Love In with his own new band, Inner City Unit. Dancers, light shows, and a host of up-and-coming post-punk psychedelics passed across the sacred stage, and Turner still remembers the event with affection.

The 1970 show, billed as a Christmas Party (and also featuring an acoustic set from Steve Peregrine Took, once one-half of Tyrannosaurus Rex, but now a mere bystander as his erstwhile partner, Marc Bolan, soared towards super-stardom) epitomized the original spirit of the Roundhouse shows.

The cost of hiring the hall ensured admission would have to be charged, but there was compensation in the form of free food and acid - and two lengthy sets from the headlining bands. Profits from the show, incidentally, were split between the Roundhouse and sundry underground allies – the *International Times* and *Frendz* newspapers, and the like.

Now, with *In Search of Space* imminent, Hawkwind were all but a Roundhouse fixture, turning up either to play or simply watch every Sunday evening. It was there that Turner met up again with Bob Calvert, a South African born poet whom he had known for a few years (who worked at *Frendz*, and lunched at the Mountain Grill cafe – a working man's and musicians' eaterie which would one day loom large in the lexicography of Hawkwind).

Calvert was a sci-fi freak, whose performances – usually alongside a young "spacey" French band he knew – already incorporated many of the themes which Hawkwind, through their music at least, were themselves striving towards.

A union between the two seemed inevitable, particularly after Turner described Hawkwind's sound to Calvert. "It struck me as being the perfect

description of the music I myself was playing at the time," Calvert later explained. Hitherto, he admitted, "I assumed that [Hawkwind] were just another heavy rock band." He immediately set to work on the logbook which would be presented free with the *Space* album.

Like Stacia, Calvert's earliest performances alongside Hawkwind

ROBERT CALVERT

were casual walk-on parts whenever their paths crossed. He was not even the only literary figure involved with Hawkwind at this time.

Science Fiction author Michael Moorcock had long been heavily involved in the Notting Hill community, staging shows by the likes of Brinsley Schwarz (a harmony–laden country-rock freak-out featuring a young Nick Lowe), Mighty Baby (whose Martin Stone later appeared in the Pink Fairies), and Quiver (with Tim Renwick, later a member of Pink Floyd's touring band).

Moorcock knew Hawkwind through this connection; had even helped immortalize them in *IT*, via the *Codename Hawkwind* comic strip (drawn by Jim Cawthorn). Now, shortly after the release of *In Search of Space*, he found himself making the transition from promoting the band's shows, to actually appearing within them.

As was to happen so often in the future, Calvert had just "gone off his rocker" (as Moorcock indelicately puts it), running amok through the Metropole Hotel lobby with an enormous broadsword. At Brock and Turner's invitation, Moorcock stepped in as his temporary replacement. "Sonic Attack", still a regular in both Hawkwind and Nik Turner's live sets, was debuted at his first ever show with them, at a small theater on Notting Hill's Portobello Road.

Calvert returned to the fold shortly afterwards, and soon, he and Hawkwind were regularly performing together at the *IT/Frendz* owned Sisters Club in Tottenham. Early in 1972, Calvert became a full-time band member.

The earliest Calvert compositions to become associated with Hawkwind are those which appear throughout the *In Search of Space* flight long. The lyrics to both "10 Seconds to Forever" and "The Awakening" appear here. Now he was throwing himself full-time into composing for the group, in addition to introducing many of the concepts which, in the hands of Turner and Brock, would finally unite Hawkwind's Space Rock with the Space Lyrics their extended freak-outs demanded. "Space Is Deep", "Time We Left This World Today" and "Lord of Light" (its title borrowed from a Roger Zelazny novel), highlights the group's third album, *Doremi Fasol Latido*, and unmistakably bear Calvert's imprimatur.

If any single event crystallized both Hawkwind's reputation and cemented their future, however, it was the Greasy Truckers Party at the Roundhouse, on February 13th, 1972. The gig was another benefit (for the Greasy Truckers themselves), and as usual, it boasted a stellar line-up – Hawkwind, the Welsh improv specialists Man, Magic Michael and Brinsley Schwarz.

Hawkwind's entire set that night was recorded for release across the

Greasy Truckers charity benefit record (two songs, "Born to Go" and "Master of the Universe") and a triple album honoring the previous summer's Glastonbury Fayre festival – "Welcome to the Future" and "Silver Machine", the first Calvert-Brock (aka S McManus) composition to see vinyl.

In its original form, "Silver Machine" is not a song one would mark out for distinction; the trademark riff is intact, but the vocals – by Calvert and Brock – are all over the place, the drumming is erratic, and at close to five minutes, it seems way over-long.

The wonders of the modern recording studio! Completely remixed, with the original vocals replaced by Lemmy's far more confident performance, and those sonic elements which would become synonymous with Hawkwind – the bubbling whoosh of the synth, and the driving bass-which-thinks-it's-a-lead-guitar - raised to new prominence, "Silver Machine" was released as a single in June, 1972, and promptly gave Hawkwind their first ever British hit.

Promoted on television by a three minute blur of movement filmed at another Hawkwind concert, "Silver Machine" soared to #2 on the chart, an incandescent moment in an already shimmering year.

Suddenly, Space Rock was no longer an underground secret, and if Hawkwind had so chosen, they could easily have developed into genuine superstars, turning up on *Top of the Pops* every Thursday, churning out their awful visions of infinity, cold, dead and icy. Instead, they held off releasing a follow-up to "Silver Machine" for another year (when "Urban Guerilla" leaped into the Top 40, only to be withdrawn within days, following a spate of terrorist activity); even omitted "Silver Machine" from the forthcoming *Doremi* album.

"I don't know why we did that," admits Nik Turner. "I think because it had already been out as a single, we thought everybody had heard it. I didn't question those things at the time."

But still their shows became a hub of teenybop excitement.

"Hawkwind in the past... always had a 'cool' type of audience," Brock complained. "We liked to see our friends coming to gigs and bringing their children along. [But] when the single took off... the audiences got progressively younger, and the atmosphere was crushing and uncomfortable, so naturally they [the friends] stayed away."

If "Silver Machine" altered Hawkwind's audience, however, it also altered what they could offer that audience. On November 8th, 1972, at the Norwich Corn Exchange, Hawkwind kicked off the most adventurous tour of their careers, a full scale cosmic extravaganza called the Space Ritual.

The roots of the Space Ritual were sewn back in November, 1971. "At

the moment we're getting a space odyssey together," Brock said in an interview, "which will be a completely environmental situation. In a way, it's a progression of what we're doing now. Everybody will be given a free programme, so they can understand what's going on, and project their fantasies on top of it." He later admitted that if they'd not been able to stage the Space Ritual, "I think the band would have broken up."

"It was a very grandiose thing," says Nik Turner today. "Big stage sets, a lot of equipment, big trucks, very high overheads. But everybody was into it, so it was a very communal thing."

Hawkwind's entourage had indeed swollen to become a commune in its own right. The seven musicians were joined by half a dozen roadies, five lighting technicians – Jonathan Smeeton's legendary Liquid Len and the Lensmen team; three dancers – Dame Stacia, Miss Rene and Tony Carrera; a costume designer; and a mobile disc jockey, Andy Dunkley.

Dunkley was one of a handful of DJs (John Peel, Jeff Dexter and Jerry Floyd join him) whose fame, established during the boom of the late 1960s, equalled – oftentimes even eclipsed! – the bands with whom they worked.

A regular on the festival circuit, Dunkley's popularity as between-band entertainment was such that his name on a showbill was worth so many more bums-on-seats, and though he today tries to play down his importance ("I just made sure I played music which fit the bands"), his very presence throughout a decade of the ever-shifting British Underground testifies to his importance. He was there for Hawkwind and the Fairies – he was still there for the Clash and the Damned.

Dunkley met Hawkwind for the first time at the Isle of Wight, in 1970 – coincidentally, the first festival he ever played. He was with them again at Glastonbury, the following year, and at a memorable event on the North Devon coast, where the opening Magic Muscle staged a drug-taking Olympics in a tent in a field, before joining the Hawks and the Fairies for a spaced-out jam monster, the Magic Pinkwind show. "I was so out of it afterwards," Dunkley confesses, "that when it came to dismantling my gear, what normally took 15 minutes ended up taking three hours!"

Late in 1971, Dunkley accepted Hawkwind's invitation to hit the road with them, traveling up to the midlands city of Derby only to discover, upon arrival, "that I'd left all my fucking cartridges at home." The rest of the band simply smiled. "Ah well, these things happen."

A year later, Dunkley was as much a part of the Hawkwind show as the musicians and dancers, and just as deeply embroiled in the designing and staging of the Space Ritual.

"We were all totally psyched," he enthuses. "The Floyd had been a

little into that area, but the thing about Hawkwind was, they were more raw, they were more rough'n'ready, and you could dance to them. There was a definite Big Deal to this whole thing, and I remember driving up to the first gig with Barney Bubbles, and we were imagining all the things we could requisition from passers-by for the Space Ritual – draw up a huge requisition list, then just go up to people in the street and take things from them; 'I'm sorry, we need this for the Space Ritual.'"

That first gig, however, was almost the last one. "Hawkwind had long since established a very heavy reputation with police around the country, because of the drug thing... and they didn't only get you for drugs, they got you for anything they thought was 'subversive activity'.

"We got to the gig, everything's set up, the light show's set up, the band's soundchecking on stage, and lo and behold, here comes the East Anglia drug squad. At the time, everybody used to stash their drugs in their equipment, and here come the sniffer dogs, up onto the stage, towards the gear. Suddenly everyone left the stage apart from Dikmik and Del, who were still noodling away at their synthesizers. The dogs came on stage – and both Dikmik and Del got into subsonics.

"The dogs freaked. Totally. They didn't have a fucking clue what was happening. After it was all over, there was Dame Stacia calming the dogs down, the handlers not knowing what was happening, and the dogs unable to find a thing, even if they'd wanted to.

"And that was the first gig of the Space Ritual tour!"

Several shows on the tour were recorded, with highlights of two, in Liverpool and Brixton, released the following year as the *Space Ritual* double album.

The record had its faults – the sonic limitations of the vinyl medium excised chunks of two songs, as well as the mesmeric encore of "You Shouldn't Do That", "Seeing It As You Really Are" and "Silver Machine".

Absent, too, was a sense of the sheer dynamism of the show, the band totally sublimated by the lights – squad car strobes, blistered neon, colors the audiences had never before imagined; the slide show – stark planets, bleak landscapes, harsh metallic objects passing through the icy void; the stage set – enormous speakers built into cardboard tubes, brought to life by Barney Bubbles' luminous designs.

But still... UA's ads called the album "88 minutes of brain damage", and they weren't kidding. *Space Ritual* was unearthly, unequivocal, unerring, a solid roar into which the individual instruments simply blended until guitar was indistinguishable from saxophone, flute from bass, rocket roar from engine throb, through which Dikmik's pinprick whistles catapulted from the passenger hold like space dust, the blips of asteroids on the radar screen, while Dettmar interspersed his own gen-

erations with the fuzzy roar of Andy Dunkley's DJ-ing collection, familiar records spun backwards and off-center becoming the static-laden broadcasts from an increasingly distant planet earth.

It was to be another year before the United States got its first taste of the Space Ritual, a year during which Bob Calvert quit, and Dave Brock complained that the last time out had broken the bank. But as the band touched down on American soil, all that was forgotten. The only thing that mattered now was the future. The posters which greeted the band when they arrived in Philadelphia on Thanksgiving Day said it best – a face in shock with its spectacles splintered, and the simple legend, A VICTIM OF SONIC ATTACK. HAWKWIND IS COMING.

And America was waiting. A nation had been rotting in the years since Andrew Lauder swept his A&R gaze over all that was happening on the West Coast, and sensed some of that in Hawkwind; a nation had rotted, and turned inwards upon itself. When Hawkwind left England, Gary Glitter was #1, a riot of sequins and spangles and stomp. They reached America and it was the Carpenters.

But if the gulf which separated one nation from another was vast, that which Hawkwind would be closing the following evening was even vaster. The inky void of outer space beckoned, the crushing weight of countless light years... of travel, and of music. It was just four years since man first walked on the moon, perhaps four million since he first dreamed of doing so.

Somewhere in between, though, he had set those dreams to music, and if the Space Ritual was the culmination of those dreams so far, then the baggage in Hawkwind's cargo hold was even heavier than they remembered.

And yet for them, for most of the young Americans gathered to witness the Stateside birth of Space Rock, the journey had commenced less than eight years earlier, in the ragged van which carried another group of musical cosmonauts forward to their next low-paying gig.

They were discussing their music, but playing other peoples' while they did it. One of them, their manager – let's call him Andrew – said, "it's time you boys got weirder," and he hummed a snatch of Love's "Little Red Book".

Another, we'll call him Nick, picked up the beat and drummed on his knees. Which is where the third, call him Syd, started strumming that snatch on his unplugged guitar, strumming that riff, but taking it further than it had ever been before.

"Is this weird enough for you?" he asked with a smile.

And the others all nodded. It was.

chapter two

Set the Controls

(for the third stone from the sun)

Syd Barrett was off the bus almost before it stopped moving, much preferring to tour the town than tour the country with the last great package tour of the sixties.

Top of the bill was the Jimi Hendrix Experience, playing a 40 minute set which highlighted virtually everything the band had recorded to date. Next up were the Move, still riding high in the chart with the anthemic "Flowers in the Rain". They played half an hour. Syd and the Floyd came third, with a 17 minute show that seldom got beyond a savage "Interstellar Overdrive"; Amen Corner got a quarter of an hour, the Nice had twelve minutes, and Outer Limits and Eire Apparent got eight minutes each.

From its opening at London's Royal Albert Hall on November 14th, 1967, the tour stretched for a little over two weeks, two shows a day in towns and cities which are little more than afterthoughts on a modern British tour – Bournemouth, Blackpool, Chatham, Newcastle, Portsmouth,

Coventry. And while its effect on the public awareness of the individual bands was inestimable, the outing had its sad side as well. Syd.

Most nights, the guitarist would reach the venue hours after his bandmates, and minutes before he was due on stage. Once there, he'd play out the next act in the drama, real or imagined, which has fueled his legend ever since.

There was the night he couldn't get his hair to hang right, so he crushed downers into his hair cream, then poured the whole jar over his head. Beneath the hot lights, it looked as though his entire head was melting.

There was the time he surrounded himself with so many echo boxes that the rest of the band couldn't even make out when he was playing, let alone what.

There was the show when he didn't touch his guitar all night, and another when he played a completely different set to the band.

And there was the night he didn't show up.

Davy O'List was 17, the youngest member of the Nice, the youngest musician on the tour bus. But he was a prodigy, a genius, a true child star. He'd been about to join John Mayall's band, successor to the recently errant Peter Green, when the Nice's call came; and when his new band taped their debut album, O'List didn't just compete with virtuoso organist Keith Emerson, he all but wiped him out.

But he was willing to learn all the same, and every gig of the tour, he remembers, "I used to stand by the side of the stage to watch the Floyd. They only used to play that one number in their set, and because it was a fairly straightforward guitar thing, I was able to pick it up quite quickly. So when Syd didn't turn up one night (no-one remembers where), Floyd asked me to go on instead."

O'List agreed. He'd already changed out of the clothes he'd worn onstage with the Nice, so he slipped on a new jacket and went out there.

At first, the crowd was fooled. O'List kept his back to the crowd, and it seemed like the whole hall was shouting messages to Syd. "Then I turned around and they all shut up immediately."

A little over two months later, Syd Barrett played his last gig as a member of Pink Floyd. Twenty six years later, he still haunts them.

Them, and a lot of other people, too. Other careers have reached firmer conclusions – Jimi Hendrix even died! But that didn't stop him putting out more records, more and more until he seemed more prolific in death than he ever was in life. Syd, though... when he decided enough was enough, that really was it. Prior to the release of *Opel*, a collection of dodgy solo studio out-takes in 1987, his record company had sworn that they had nothing at all in the vaults, not that was usable anyway (and *Opel* proved they weren't lying). And though Floyd fans kept on crying

for the two oft-bootlegged out-takes which they knew existed somewhere, neither the label nor the Floyd themselves would budge. Syd was gone, and that was that.

But where had he gone, and why did people care so much?

PINK FLOYD '66

"Syd Barrett was such an amazing guitarist," remembers O'List. "He really was unique, as much as Jimi Hendrix in his own right. I don't think many people remember him today for his guitar playing, but for me that was the best thing about the Floyd."

Others remember his songwriting – when Imaginary Records conceived a Syd Barrett tribute album in 1987, they landed contributions from acts as disparate as the Shamen and the Soup Dragons.

Elsewhere, David Bowie has covered Syd's "See Emily Play", Love and Rockets have hit on "Lucifer Sam", and Camper Van Beethoven even grabbed "Interstellar Overdrive", conjuring up possibly the most successful Barrett cover yet created in the process! David Lowery, now frontman with Cracker, explains, "at high school, my first band did all covers – we played 'Interstellar Overdrive' and 'Careful With That Axe, Eugene'. Then, when we got Camper together, and were rehearsing, Greg Lisher started playing the riff from 'Interstellar', and – 'I love that song! We have to record it!'"

Jesus & Mary Chain recorded "Vegetable Man", Marc Almond did "Terrapin", comedian Neil covered "The Gnome". And though some of it, for sure, was simply musical namedropping, seconding Syd because it the hip thing to do, still you have to wonder. In 1973, David Bowie was the biggest thing since sliced Beatles. He could have covered the world if he wanted.

Instead he went for Syd, and though it had only been three years since Barrett last released a new album, two since he last gave an interview, and barely more than twelve months since he last appeared on stage, the memories Bowie invoked were powerful. Syd Barrett – the uncrowned King of Acid Rock, the non-commissioned captain of Space Rock. In his wake, everybody else have merely been lieutenants.

"Interstellar Overdrive", the song which O'List remembers as "a fairly straightforward guitar thing", was the launching pad not only for Pink Floyd's own career; it was the projectile which carried rock'n'roll itself into the cosmos.

Not all rock'n'roll, of course, and not all the way either. Not every song about space is necessarily Space Rock, for if it were, Bowie's own "Space Oddity", Elton John's "Rocket Man" and Tom Rapp's "For the Dead in Space", any song with a sci-fi angle and a gratuitous glance at the stars, could be considered.

Neither can it be conclusively argued that "Interstellar Overdrive" was the first Space Rock song (although maybe "piece of music" would be a more adequate description). By late 1966, when it first materialized in Pink Floyd's repertoire, the Byrds had already slipped into the fifth dimension ("5D" – #44 in July, 1966). The Randells had danced the "Martian Hop", the Tornadoes hit with "Telstar"...

Where "Interstellar Overdrive" makes its mark is in its obvious, yet simultaneously naive, link back to traditional rock'n'roll motifs. Pink Floyd themselves started life as just another post-Beat Boom band, extending and extemporizing on sundry themes of "Roadrunner", accord-

ing to the demands of their audience.

When they played their first gig at London's Marquee Club, in February 1966, the Floyd were performing Chuck Berry numbers, albeit beneath a cloak of heavy improvisation. Nine months later, at the opening of the Roundhouse, they were still turning out traditional R&B, but it had mutated even further, and so skillfully that the transition from the standard "Cops and Robbers" to Barrett's own "Interstellar Overdrive" was barely noticeable – until the new song blew the power.

Pink Floyd's first attempts to land a record deal were doomed to failure. Those early Barrett compositions which made it onto the band's first demo tape, "I Get Stoned" and "Let's Roll Another One", though typical of the drug-induced whimsy which was slowly sweeping England's capital, were hardly the marks of any talent greater than could be found propping up the bill at any club, any night ("Let's Roll Another One" later appeared on the b-side of Pink Floyd's first single, judiciously retitled "Candy and the Currant Bun").

Even Joe Boyd, the producer who would eventually take the band into the studio, had nothing more encouraging to offer than a suggestion that they make another tape – "and this time, try spending some money on it!"

In December, 1966, Pink Floyd opened a new club in Tottenham Court Road, the basement beneath the Blarney Club which would later (seven days later, to be precise) become UFO. No less than the Roundhouse, UFO was to become a legend within its own lifetime; immortal after its death. Like the Cavern in Liverpool five years before, or the Covent Garden Roxy ten years later, UFO became the focal point of the underground; the heart and soul of it, too. It was just a pity it smelled so bad.

"To open the doors to the big basement room was a shock," wrote Miles, a co-founder of the underground magazine *IT*. "The damp heat hit you in the face like a gorilla's breath. The pulsating bubbles of the light show crawled over the walls, the ceiling and the floor. The reek of incense cut across the acrid aroma of hash and sweat."

The songs which were now flooding out of Barrett's imagination echoed the preoccupations of the UFO crowd. Indeed, tracing the imagery which runs through Barrett's contributions to the Summer of Love, it swiftly becomes apparent that if Syd did see himself as an embryonic pop astronaut, it was only one of a dozen careers which were open to him.

There was "Arnold Layne", immortalizing the pervert who stole underwear from Barrett's art-college friends' washing lines; "Chapter 24", based upon one particular segment of the *I Ching*; and "The Gnome", oozing the imagery of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. "Lucifer Sam" touched lightly upon the occult; Pink Floyd's debut album title, *Piper At The Gates*

of Dawn, was borrowed from CS Lewis.

Only "Astronomy Domine", the album's opening cut, made overt reference to interstellar travel, and the importance of that song within the legend owes less to its prominence within Pink Floyd's early set than it does to the song's enduring popularity. Not until after Barrett's removal, in early 1968, did Pink Floyd truly embrace the astral path down which history now records them as having forever wandered.

"Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun", "Let There Be More Light" and the ethereal "Saucerful of Secrets", all from the band's second album, were recorded at the very end of Barrett's time with Pink Floyd; the latter two, indeed, were taped without any participation from Syd whatsoever.

PINK FLOYD '68

"Astronomy Domine" remained in the band's live set for at least the next two years, then, because it now *belonged* there, thematically if not – as the somewhat cautious version which appears on the live portion of the *Ummagumma* album testifies – musically.

Besides, Syd himself buried his space cadet reputation in 1970, in an interview with Giovanni Dadomo. The only sci-fi he had ever enjoyed, he insisted, were *Journey into Space* and *Quatermass*, "which was when I was about 15."

It is also noticeable that "Interstellar Overdrive", as an instrumental, could have been about anything whatsoever. Only its title rocketed it into the reaches of outer space, and had mankind itself not been reaching with

increasing impatience towards the stars (the moon landing was now less than two years away, with every new space mission seen as one more dress rehearsal); had he, for instance, been preparing to walk the bottom of the uncharted oceans, maybe "Interstellar Overdrive", and the entire psychedelic movement itself, would have looked there for inspiration. "Submarine Overdrive" might not have the same ring to it, but it's simply a matter of what one is accustomed to hearing. Musically, the concept is no less applicable!

That said, "Interstellar Overdrive" was to remain a veritable talisman for the early, Barrett-era Pink Floyd. Live, it was the signal, in the parlance of the day, to "freak out", to break away from the more structured joys of "See Emily Play" (the band's second single, and first British Top 5 hit), "Lucifer Sam" and "The Scarecrow". And it was this need, or at least urge, to freak out which prompted the band to take the track into the studio with them at virtually every opportunity they got.

On February 28th, twenty-seven days after the band turned professional, they recorded an astonishing 17 minutes worth of the song, alongside both sides of their eventual debut single under the now satisfied guidance of Joe Boyd. (This performance later surfaced piecemeal within the soundtrack of the Swinging London documentary *Tonite, Let's All Make Love in London*, and in complete form on a 1990 EP.)

"Interstellar Overdrive" resurfaced during the recording of *Piper At The Gates of Dawn*, with two separate takes being spread across three albums – the noticeable different mixes which surfaced on mono and stereo versions of "Piper", and a slightly longer version which appeared on the 1971 *Relics* compilation.

And while Barrett himself never performed the track during any of the live radio sessions Pink Floyd undertook throughout 1967, preferring to debut new or experimental material ("Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun" figured in their first Radio One session, in October, 1967), when Pink Floyd appeared on Radio One's *Top Gear* on December 2nd, 1968 – after Syd's departure – "Interstellar Overdrive" was present and correct. Like "Astronomy Domine", it was to feature in Pink Floyd's live set until as late as 1971.

Two events marked Pink Floyd's emergence from the underground, and into the cold light of day – a suitably alarmist story in the tabloid *News of the World*, in which Pink Floyd were numbered amongst the sinister ringleaders of the drug-demented "Psychedelic Experience", and the Games For May concert at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, for which Syd penned "See Emily Play".

But in terms of both Pink Floyd's subsequent history, and that of the entire British underground, the crucial event was the Fourteen Hour Technicolour Dream, at Alexander Palace on April 29th, 1967.

Some days before, the police had raided the Southampton Row basement offices of *IT* – the counter-culture newspaper which both dominated and influenced what the mainstream media was now dubbing "counter-cultural" thought processes.

In truth, *IT* was all of this and more, but its greatest impact lay not in what it told people to believe, but what it made them capable of believing.

Since its launch in October, 1966 (by Nigel, the 21 year old son of jewelry chain-store owner H. Samuel), *IT* had become the closest thing to a house publication that so amorphous an entity as the Underground could have, a symbiot through which every scheme in the world could be hatched... wouldn't it be far out if we could turn the River Thames yellow? (They couldn't.) To remove all the fencing from Notting Hill Gate? (They didn't.) To tell everyone that smoking baked banana skins makes you high? (It doesn't.)

An advertisement in *IT* was worth a dozen in the "straight" press, even those which were now reporting regularly on the emergent scene, and when the police swooped – acting upon orders issued from the Director of Public Prosecutions himself, proof of how high the tabloid fear of a psychedelic freak take-over had now permeated – they confiscated ad copy as readily as editorial, took every piece of paper they could find, in fact, including six tons of back issues, telephone directories, family photographs, everything.

It was a wipe-out, but it didn't stop *IT*. Despite the police warning that they'd be back the moment another issue appeared, publication continued as usual, with *IT* staffers trusting to the honesty of distributors, advertisers and subscribers alike to let them know where their own arrangements were before that rude interruption.

Money was in desperately short supply, however, at least until the Technicolour Dream was born. Alexander Palace, a gorgeous slab of Victoriana dominating a hill over north London's Wood Green, was procured at very short notice, and with it, the services of every freak in town.

Artists and poets offered their services – Suzy Creemcheese was there, Yoko Ono, then regarded as little more than an avant-garde Japanese who had once met John Lennon, Ron Geesin, who would later record the bubbling, bobbling *The Body* with Floyd's Roger Waters.

A fairground helter-skelter appeared in one corner of the Palace; and from within a fiber-glass igloo, smiling pranksters distributed banana-peel joints. Films and slides played on every available surface. Outside, fireworks exploded into the evening sky, announcing the dawn of the dream. And inside, there were the bands, forty-one of them, all playing for free on two separate stages.

Some were known quantities, with nothing to prove. Pink Floyd were the headline attractions, of course, but the Move were gnawing at their velvet coat-tails, a gang of Birmingham ruffians who had suddenly exploded into the hottest live act of the year. Calmed but never, ever tamed, by the end of the year, the Move would be banging on the Beatles' own door, out-grossing the Rolling Stones, and yes, headlining over the Floyd *et al* on the package tour to end them all.

It was so easy to be diverted. John's Children, an anarchic bunch of Home Counties Mods who disguised their inability to play by making as much noise as they could, announced that they would be playing their set completely naked.

Modesty eventually prevailed, but still the band made an impression, vocalist Andy Ellison racing through the audience with his hands full of ripped feather pillows, drummer Chris Townson demolishing his kit the moment he looked at it, and guitarist Marc Bolan simply balancing his guitar on his head, and spending the entire set walking around the stage while feedback howled in protest.

"We don't just do a musical performance," Bolan later explained, his peculiar elfin voice cracking with excitement. "It's a forty-five minute happening. Sometimes we're barely conscious of what we're doing. It's like a big turn-on seance between us and the audience. I've seen Andy go quite mad, like a witchdoctor at a tribal dance."

The Purple Gang turned up with a motley collection of washboards and mandolins, all the better to propel themselves through a manic set of psychedelic whimsy; and while vocalist Lucifer prowled the stage, flashing cabalistic symbols and uttering incantations, the Gang stormed into "Granny Takes A Trip", the nearly-hit which at least lent its name to what became the Chelsea Kings Road's best-known boutique.

The Utterly Incredible Too Long Ago To Remember Sometimes Shouting At People, a sprawling pick-up band which seemed as large as the audience, played a set; so did the Soft Machine, well-heeled freaks up from Canterbury for the day, and mirroring the minds of every onlooker. Daevid Allen, the Softs' Australian guitarist, represented the *true* underground with the torch of his miner's hat scything jets of bright light through the psychedelic stew; Kevin Ayers, their bassist, marked the infinity of flight, his roughly rouged face surmounted by a giant brimmed hat affixed with airplane wings.

The Social Deviants, *IT's* house band, churned American R&B into something even nastier than the Floyd had ever imagined; then the world slipped into craziness when Arthur Brown appeared.

Brown had been flirting with the mass-consciousness for nearly two years, since he escaped Reading University and moved up to London. He recorded two tracks for the soundtrack to the 1966 Roger Vadim movie *La*

Curee (The Game is Over in America), then landed a residency at Mayfair's Seven-and-a-half club. It was there that he was spotted by Joe Boyd, who instantly offered Brown and his band, the three man Crazy World, a gig at UFO.

Brown himself was blessed with one of the fullest voices in rock, capable of shifting in seconds from satanic whisper to blood-chilling scream, but his influences were American soul and R&B. Screaming Jay Hawkins and James Brown both contributed staples to the Crazy World's live repertoire ("I Put A Spell On You" and "I've Got Money" even survived to the band's eponymous debut album, in 1968), while amongst Brown's own compositions – "Don't Tell Me" and "Baby, You Know What You're Doing" (both from *La Curee*) – were similarly, heavily indebted.

Jazz, lengthy improvisations and even four or five minute comedy skits all took their place in the show. "It was the beginning of the underground," Brown remembers. "There was Soft Machine, ourselves, Pink Floyd, Marc Bolan was just starting out, and we were the sort of people they'd send out to places where there wasn't an underground and we'd carve the way. Sometimes people would kick our gear down the stairs because they objected to our music, sometimes they'd accept it."

They accepted it within the fertile atmosphere of UFO, and it was here that Brown's imagery began to shift. Drummer Drachen Theaker recalled, "it was a wild act, but it wasn't that wild musically. We were just an R&B group underneath. What made it psychedelic was Arthur's acting ability, and the fact that Vince (organist Vincent Crane) and I just overplayed to death at gigs. We made a hell of a noise for two people!"

Two period views of the Crazy World sum them up. First, journalist Charles Fox: "...there is a sinister element... one which recalls the smell of seaweed and the rattle of spades and pails. For somehow Arthur Brown contrives to be both the malevolent Punch and – in drag, with grotesque wig and flowered gown – a psychedelic Judy."

And now, author Nik Cohn: "...he was one long gangling skinny streak, complete with haystack black hair and great staring eyes and an elephant's nose. And when he came on, he was wearing Sun God robes, a science fiction mask, the Bug-Eyed Thing, and his head was on fire."

Got that? *His head was on fire.* Not his hat, not even his hair. His head. And though it eventually transpired that actually, it was his hat, and occasionally his hair as well, still the effect – as Charles Fox continued – was "disconcerting, even faintly perverse."

The focus of the Crazy World's act shifted after Brown came up with "Fire" – and eventually, the so-called "Fire Suite" (actually entitled "Tales from the Neurotic Nights of Hieronymous Anonymous") which was to consume side one of the band's debut album. Part Biblical horror, part bad trip, "Fire" was the cue for Brown's "crown" – originally a vegetable

colander with a candle stick attached, but later developing into a considerably more elaborate helmet – to burst into flames.

"Fire" went on to top the charts throughout much of the civilized world, establishing – even typecasting – Brown as *the* God of Hell Fire. Certainly, he was never able to repeat its success (although he was to remain musically active throughout the first half of the 1970s), but the fire dance became one of the most famous routines in rock theater.

In April, 1967, a full year was to elapse before "Fire" swept the charts, and Brown's act was still an underground secret. At the Technicolour Dream, most people knew of it by reputation alone, and as his headful of flames devoured the psychedelic night, Brown's audience stood transfixed, not only by the majesty of the occasion, but by its potential horror, too.

At least once, the grapevine insisted (and Brown today confirms), Brown managed to set himself alight, but the mortal danger in which Brown placed himself only paled alongside the spiritual peril his music seemingly warned against. "There's only one way out," warns the disembodied female a few minutes into the "Fire Suite". "Go bathe yourself in fire."

"The Great Spontaneous Apple Creation" was Brown's token stab at sci-fi psychedelia, the tale of a planet invaded by sentient fruit, which owed as much to an acid trip as it did to a cosmic journey.

It fit perfectly in with the burgeoning mood of the times; the Nice had just introduced the instrumental "Diamond Hard Apples of the Moon" into their set; Jimi Hendrix was contemplating the "Third Stone from the Sun"; the Stones were sounding convincingly alone, "2,000 Light Years from Home"; a raucous comedy troupe called the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band were dropping speed with the Urban Spaceman. As Neil Armstrong's famous "great step for mankind" drew closer, the musical theater, too, was just one act away from consummating its destiny.

It was only fitting, then, that this final drama should unfold at the Technicolour Dream, backstage before Pink Floyd's dawn appearance.

The band had been playing a regular show in East Deerham that evening; they reached London after a motorway dash which was inspired as much by the need to reach Alexander Palace as by their haste to escape the roomful of violent gypsies by whom they'd been confronted at the gig.

Once there, they swiftly joined in with the spirit of the event, but it was Syd towards whom concerned eyes were increasingly turning as showtime approached.

He was no stranger to acid, had long since passed beyond the "experimental" stage, and now resorted to the drug as both a recreation and an escape. Today, you can even buy a grainy home movie of Syd's first

trip!

But even at his wildest – and his friends talk freely of the violent moods which the drug was capable of inducing in the normally mild-mannered Syd – Barrett always maintained some sort of control. He knew how much he was taking and generally, he knew what it would do.

The dose which was slipped into his drink at Alexander Palace, unbeknownst to Syd (but witnessed by several other people), then, represented unknown territory, and the guitarist reacted badly; so badly, that those same witnesses distinctly recall one of Floyd's own entourage forcibly pushing a very reluctant Barrett onto the stage.

The sun was creeping in through the huge windows as Pink Floyd started to play, pitting its own increasing might against the man-made lights which still swirled around the cavernous hall, reflecting off Syd's mirrored Telecaster. "Syd's eyes blazed as his notes soared up into the strengthening light," wrote Miles; packed tightly around the stage, ten thousand people bathed in the music, holding hands with whoever was alongside them. It was a magical moment.

And then the strobe lights started.

Syd didn't falter; he kept on playing. But if he'd looked uncertain before, now his expression was one of pure panic. Something was happening in his mind, something which went far, far, beyond the natural effects of the acid-spike, and whose effects would linger long after the drug had worn off.

Historically, the Crazy Syd stories started right there. Roger Water's own dominance of Pink Floyd followed automatically.

"If Waters hadn't been there," Pete Townshend once said of the post-Dream Floyd, "I don't think Syd would have been able to find his way to the stage. He seemed to spend most of the time setting up echoes in the machines he used. You would hear a guitar playing, then suddenly you realized he'd gone off stage, was fiddling with an amp or sitting in a chair. You didn't quite know where the sound was coming from."

Barrett's disintegration was slow, but marked. The vast majority of the songs for which he remains famed, within Pink Floyd's canon at least, were already written by now; the only significant new material in which he had a part were "Reaction in G" – an essentially free-form piece which the band themselves described as a protest against being expected to play their hits in concert; "Apples and Oranges" – a harmless piece of fluff about a girl Syd saw shopping one day; "Vegetable Man" – literally an inventory of Syd's psychedelic wardrobe; and two songs which, perhaps more than any, testify to Syd's disintegration: "Scream Thy Last Scream" and "Jugband Blues".

"At that point, Syd actually knew what was happening to him," Floyd

co-manager Peter Jenner told journalist Nick Kent. "'Jugband Blues' (recorded for possible single release, but eventually held over for the band's second album) is the ultimate self-diagnosis on a state of schizophrenia."

"Scream", on the other hand, was what Kent called "a masterful splurge of blood-curdling pre-Beefheartian lunacy", totally unlike anything Pink Floyd had ever recorded before – or ever would again. But when they recorded their second *Top Gear* session, in December, both songs were included in the broadcast.

Pink Floyd visited the United States in October, an outing which has spawned more than its fair share of legends. Recording an appearance on the *Pat Boone Show*, Barrett simply stared down every question his host tried to ask him. On *American Bandstand*, he refused to even pretend to play (or pretend to pretend to play – the show was mimed). "It was ghastly," Jenner's partner, Andrew King, remembered. "Syd wasn't into moving his lips that day, so we had to pretend that Roger sang."

Syd's disintegration continued. Shows in Chicago and New York were cancelled and the band flew home, with Syd's future in Pink Floyd very much up in the air.

But the decision would have to wait; the Hendrix tour beckoned; so did Christmas On Earth Revisited, a December 22nd extravaganza at London's Olympia exhibition hall. Hendrix, the Move and the Soft Machine were also playing; Syd, however, wasn't. He spent the entire gig standing with his arms limp at his sides, while Waters tried to keep the show alive by thumping out a repetitive bass line.

Dave Gilmour, a Floyd friend from their Cambridge hometown, was drafted into the band, ostensibly as a fifth member, but more accurately as Syd's replacement. (Davy O'List was also considered.) The band played five shows in this form, and then one day on the way to a gig, the band's Bentley paused. The rest of the group were already inside, and someone asked,"shall we pick Syd up?" Someone else replied, "no, let's not bother." And according to Gilmour, "we never went to pick him up again. It's as simple as that."

Syd launched (or should that be "lurched"?) into a solo career within months of his ejection, commencing the sessions which, alternately breathtaking and bad-tempered, bright and brittle, would eventually metamorphose into *The Madcap Laughs*.

Little about the record (whose title, far from self-prophetic, was lifted from the track "Octopus") harks back to Barrett's spacey past... the tracks which did allow him some improvisational leeway – "Lanky" (parts one and two) and "Rhamadan", were both dropped from the album's projected running order very early on in the year-long sessions, leaving the finished record the song (and sometimes, strange-song) oriented

effort which was finally released in January, 1970.

Barrett, Syd's second – and final – solo album, followed a similar pattern, and thereafter... he surfaced once or twice, even impinged once again on the Space Rock story. And yes, he did spend four days in the studio in 1974, although he never got past some unfocussed blues riffs. Since then, though, he has spent more time in legend than in public life. Maybe it's more comfortable there.

In 1977, Alice Cooper's guitarist Glenn Buxton described his own first meeting with Barrett, in LA during the Floyd's ill-fated first American tour. The then-totally unknown Alice had rented a house and invited the visitors to dinner; Syd, remembered Buxton, "was a very strange person. He never talked, but we'd be sitting at dinner and all of a sudden I'd pick up the sugar and pass it to him. It was like I heard him say 'pass the sugar'. It was like telepathy. That was the first time in my life I'd ever met someone who could do that freely, and this guy did it all the time.

"He was definitely from Mars."

A lot of people were now heading out to join him there.

CHAPTER THREE

The Psychedelic Warlords

Jimi Hendrix used to drop 300 micrograms of acid before every show, and if he did things with the guitar that other people had never seen done before, it was because he was experiencing things they'd never experienced before. And if he was weird on 300, he was even crazier on 500.

"Third Stone from the Sun", Hendrix's ode to Planet Earth as seen through the eyes of an extra-terrestrial visitor (who decides that the most intelligent lifeform on the planet are chickens, and promptly destroys the place), was one of the first songs recorded for the Experience's debut album; the basic tracks were laid down at the end of 1966, then built up from there.

According to Experience drummer Mitch Mitchell, it was not a song the band enjoyed playing live; the most ambitious track on what became *Are You Experienced* was also the most experimental, depending for its structure upon a basic riff which only occasionally arose from the anti-matter freeform from which the rest of the song was constructed.

In truth, Hendrix had more in common with Arthur Brown's slaughter of the blues than with the psychedelic madness into which he projected his own, yet, he too was to contribute to the slow development of Space Rock, in deed if not necessarily in word.

Musically, Hendrix was grounded in his native Afro-American heritage (his own career began alongside the likes of the Isley Brothers and Little Richard); his arrival in London at the onset of the underground was as much fortuitous timing as it was a calculated act – in any case, it was his manager, ex-Animal Chas Chandler, who brought him to England. Without the rugged Geordie's intervention, Hendrix might have remained unsung in Greenwich Village forever.

It was Chandler, too, who turned Hendrix on to science fiction. "I'd always been a [sci-fi] freak and had a book which I told him to read... *Earth Abides*. It really turned him on to [the genre] and that's where a lot of his lyrics came from."

"When I'm playing," Hendrix himself explained, "I go up in a rocket ship. You can all come with me – join me in my ship." That ship became *Axis, Bold as Love*, the second Experience album, and the most fully – realized of the band's three LPs; the opening "Symphony of Experience"

(later retitled "EXP") set the stage with a cacophonous roar which included the sound of Hendrix and bassist Noel Redding kicking their instruments and Mitchell dubbing strange voices – enough, one reviewer concluded, to establish the piece as "a striking, frightening piece of cosmic composing." The notion that in space, no-one can hear you *unless* you scream was fast becoming common currency.

Taken at face value, the fantastical elements which established *Axis* as Hendrix's most overtly mystic album are, for the most part, derived not from the music but from hints of lyric, or even, the hints of explanation which Hendrix liked to offer.

"Up From The Skies" dealt with reincarnation; "If 6 Was 9" veered between considered numerology and presumptuous prophecy (Hendrix played his last ever concert on the sixth day of the ninth month, 1970) – elements which are most fascinating in their coalescence of the Hippy Lore which would eventually mutate into the so-called New Age consciousness. Hendrix now read avidly, consuming the thin line which divides mysticism from the occult, and regurgitated much of this in his music.

His astral beliefs, like those Syd Barrett may have harbored, then, constituted little more than a fraction of either his recorded work or his personal litany; when he (or more frequently, his admirers) spoke of flying saucers and spacemen, it was in the most abstract sense, a consciousness as opposed to an actuality.

Even "Moon Turn The Tides... Gently, Gently Away" (from 1969's *Electric Ladyland*), described by Hendrix as the sound of Earth's satellite attempting to communicate with mankind, but sending tidal waves and earthquakes instead of letters and phone calls, was a conceptual, as opposed to a concrete composition - at just sixty-one seconds duration, it could do little more than point the mind in a certain direction. Where the listener went from there was entirely up to the individual.

These frustrating snatches of spaciness were typical, not only of Hendrix, but of the underground as a whole. Acknowledging, by its very existence, the primal truth that the only thing preventing man from entering into a realistic dialogue with the stars is man's own short attention span, the music which erupted from the fertility of the late 1960s remained short and sharp; "Third Stone from the Sun" was less than seven minutes long, the *Piper* version of "Interstellar Overdrive" less than ten. Of course, both are lengthy by pop music standards, but wasn't pop music a notion which the underground was supposed to be opposed to?

To expand the mind, man first needed to expand his frontiers, that much was obvious. And in concert, many bands were able to do that, although the divide between meaningful improvisation and interminal

doodling remained painfully thin. So did that between genuine *progress*, and simply appearing Progressive – a musical genre which was born of this very knowledge, but which lost its way regardless.

Bands like King Crimson and Yes developed from within the psychedelic scene, but they operated beyond it; their meandering song structures, the portentousness of their lyrics, the sheer fussiness of their instrumentation, these were elements whose roots may have lain in the spirit of improvisation, but whose spirit was rooted in that of the classics – musical and literary.

The Nice, now a three-piece following the ousting of O'List early in 1968, were the most blatant offenders (assuming so condemnatory a phrase is even appropriate). From the outset, Keith Emerson's interest in classical music had shaped the Nice, as their long-standing relationship with "Rondo" evidenced, while the last thing O'List recorded with the group was a version of Leonard Bernstein's "America" – a performance which culminated, in concert, with the torching of the American flag.

Had O'List remained in the Nice, his influence might have stayed Emerson's hand – might even, as many other observers have mourned, have averted the entire course of Progressive Rock! His departure for the Misunderstood, however, left the field open for the ebullient organist to indulge his own tastes to ever-greater, and longer-lasting effect.

By the time of their final album, in 1970, the Nice were performing entire classical (or classically-inspired) suites – a penchant for pomp which Emerson only exaggerated when he linked with King Crimson's Greg Lake, and one-time Crazy World drummer Carl Palmer as – even their name testified to their self-importance! – Emerson, Lake and Palmer.

Where the Prog Rockers fell down was in failing to differentiate between inventiveness and innovation. Updating the classics was all very well, but it was nothing *new*. It didn't take music in any kind of new direction; rather, it just led it up a cul-de-sac from which the only escape was the ritual cleansing of Punk.

The same can be said, although the American band Vanilla Fudge made a similarly po-faced virtue of the attempt, for sundry assaults upon a theme of classic pop – seven minutes of "You Keep Me Hanging On", and a quaalude plod through "Daytripper" were little more than gimmicks, even at the time.

Compatriots Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead moved closer to the ideal, but though they epitomized what became the model of Acid Rock, they did so from a peculiarly earthbound angle. Even at their spaciest ("Dark Star"), the Dead remained essentially a deranged country-blues band whose doodlings had still to integrate the sheer wealth of possibilities which lay beyond the stars, and while the Airplane came closer ("Triad" even borrowed imagery from Robert Heinlein's *Stranger in*

a Strange Land), their outlook, too, remained largely landlocked. America led the space race, but it was Britain, still, who led the race into space.

Any number of outside influences can be brought to bear on this burgeoning consciousness, principally the gradual emergence of a new wave of authors – Roger Zelazny, Philip K Dick, Ursula LeGuin – for whom the Science Fiction genre was no longer a matter of hatching exotic locations for mundane adventures, but a very real expansion of the possibilities of imagination. It no longer seemed to matter what man could do; what was important was what he could *be*, and maybe, what he once was.

A United Artists press release, designed, by cruel coincidence, to explain away Amon Düül II's apparent rejection of their past (space rock) sound in favor of more temporal musings, hit this nail on the head. "Space rock is the kind of music which has been left in the old musical patterns, and it is only covered with a new packing [harsh, and not particularly true either]. Against this, Cosmic music liberates the listener in his own fantasia, and gives him the liberty of a voyager through time." Actually, true Space Rock did both.

AMON DÜÜL II

Returning to literary themes, this conflict was given the most widespread coverage in what was, ironically, published as a *non-fiction* (and consequently, non-science fiction) book in 1968, Erich von Daniken's *Chariots of the Gods*, and the Stanley Kubrick-Arthur C. Clarke movie *2001*, released that same year.

Both, in their own ways, were built upon the increasingly recognizable accumulation of scientific data which insisted that man is <u>not</u> alone

in the galaxy (although von Danikin went further by attempting to prove that fact); both strummed with mercenary fervor upon the public's obsession with the impending moon landing – twelve months and counting.

Released in June, 1968, Pink Floyd's second album, *A Saucerful of Secrets*, tapped effortlessly into this same mindset. Space Rock or Cosmic Music? It depended how tightly your seatbelt was fastened.

Saucerful of Secrets boasted just seven tracks, four of which – Syd's "Jugband Blues" swansong, "Corporal Clegg", "Remember A Day" and the charming "See Saw" – were little more than throwbacks to an earlier era. "Let There Be More Light", "Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun" and the sprawling twelve minute title track, however, offered even the most limited imagination a round trip to the cosmos.

According to the Floyd themselves, they were midway through recording "Saucerful" itself when "mutterings were heard from the control room about the boys 'having to get down to some serious work after this'. If you hold this in view," the notes to 1992's CD remastering of *Saucerful* continue, "[they] never got down to serious work ever again."

The heart of *Saucerful* was the old underground stand-by, the freak out. But it was an understated freak-out, in some ways even a sinister freak-out. Not without reason, one reviewer called the album "the most evil sounding record I know", although it was not wickedness which permeated the grooves, but desolation – the sense of being truly lost in space, without the comic stand-bys of Mr Smith and the robot to lessen the pain.

Lyrically, Roger Waters – who composed all three tracks – was still struggling to escape the shackles of conventional hippy mysticism; the opening "Let There Be More Light" meanders from history to apocrypha, namedrops Lennon's Lucy, and concludes with the immortal couplet "glowing slightly from his toes/his psychic emanations flowed."

"Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun" is stronger, simply because the vocals, buried whisperingly in the mix, are essentially secondary to the roiling rhythm, itself anchored to the only wholly decipherable phrase in the song, the title itself.

But it was the title track, three vaguely separate (but wholly inseparable) movements which half-floated, half-fluttered inexorably onwards, which established Pink Floyd's cosmic credentials, at the same time as providing the blueprint for the next three years of their recorded history.

It was originally titled "The Massed Gadgets of Hercules", a name which certainly places its apparent aims in a very different light; as "Saucerful", however, the power of suggestion imbibed it with an inescapable sense of motion. Each stage, or movement of the track – the anticipation of lift-off, the trauma of flight, the restfulness after landing

– was to be reiterated on both *Atom Heart Mother* (1970) and *Meddle* (1971), as each gave over one complete side of vinyl to single compositions (via the title track, and "Echoes" respectively). *Ummagumma*, a half-live, half-solo experiment stopgap (1969), meanwhile, offered listeners the opportunity to catch the craft in mid-flight transition.

Both "Set the Controls" and "Saucerful" reappear on the live disc, recognizable only in their adhesion to certain elements of their studio prototypes. Elsewhere, both songs possess an individuality which would otherwise hallmark a completely new composition.

Other Floyd albums from this period – the movie soundtracks *More* and *La Vallee* (*Obscured By Clouds*) (plus three otherwise unavailable cuts on *Zabriskie Point*) – rate mention only in as much as they, too, offer glimpses of visions which would later be fulfilled elsewhere: the studio take of "Careful With That Axe, Eugene" pales into significance alongside either the *Ummagumma* live version or that broadcast on *Top Gear* on August 11th, 1968 (as the subtly misspelt "The Murderotic Woman"); "Cirrus Minor" chirrups and chuckles its way through a colony of small furry aliens; and so on.

Yet despite all appearances, Pink Floyd never intended to carry the dreams of the underground within their cargo hold. The outward displays of psychedelia which characterized their live set (light shows and slides remained integral to the in-concert experience) were both heavily choreographed and highly calculated; as time passed, even the freak-out element of improvisation was lost.

By the time of *Dark Side of the Moon*, in 1973, Pink Floyd were essentially the rock'n'roll equivalent of a hack novelist or movie-maker – which is not intended to detract from the sheer majesty of *Dark Side* (591 consecutive weeks on the *Billboard* chart cannot be wrong!), but rather to signpost the almost obsessive pursuit of perfection – musical and emotional – which the album embodied.

Dark Side of the Moon, of course, was a euphemism for insanity, which detracts immediately from any sci-fi credentials the album's heavily electronic musical score might have racked up; insanity had certainly played a part in Floyd's history, and the landscapes of possibility which the concept of madness conjured up had surfaced before in Water's writing ("if I go insane," he pleaded in the two year old "If", "please don't put your wires in my brain").

Whether *Dark Side* was intended as an exorcism or simply an exploration of these thoughts is a moot point, however (so is "Shine On, You Crazy Diamond", Roger Waters' expiation of distinctly Barrett-related guilt on Floyd's next album, *Wish You Were Here*). What, after all, is man's psyche but the corollary of his furthest surroundings – inner space, as opposed to outer?

Besides, by 1973, the universe itself seemed somehow *passe*. On July 21, 1969, man walked for the first time on the lunar surface (to the strains, on British television at least, of David Bowie's "Space Oddity" – hardly the most fitting lyrical accompaniment, but that's another matter); since then, however, the space program had seemed somehow anti-climactic. History remembers the first men to visit the moon, but off-hand, who knows those who followed them? And really, who cares?

To re-energize the space program, man needed expand his physical frontiers, aim for Mars or even beyond, and not just with a unmanned canful of high-tech rubble, either. If the technology existed to put people on the moon, then surely it existed to go elsewhere as well?

Instinct said yes; NASA said no.

Bowie's "Space Oddity" remains a moment frozen in time. In part, it serves as a blueprint for Bowie's own sci-fi experiments (although they were a long way from Major Tom's voluntary exile) and the brightly painted space invaders who spearheaded Ziggy Stardust's earth assault in 1972. Elsewhere, the song again highlighted the divide between intuition and exploitation – the point at which an idea becomes a commodity.

When Bowie first played "Space Oddity" to his producer Tony Visconti, the American (who cut his teeth, incidentally, on orchestral arrangements for the Move) admits, "I hated it as much as I hated anything which seemed crass or obvious. David was writing such beautiful songs then, and suddenly he comes up with 'Space Oddity', which was just so *topical*. Men were going to be walking on the moon within weeks, and he comes up with something like that. I told him he would probably have a hit with it, but I didn't want anything to do with it." "Space Oddity" ultimately reached #5 in the UK.

Not all of Bowie's friends were quite so dismissive as Visconti. Marc Bolan – like Bowie an itinerant pop drifter who spent much of the sixties in search of direction, before settling down in the underground – was himself on the brink of "selling out" in 1969; to his eyes, the more company he had, the less damage he would suffer.

Tyrannosaurus Rex, the duo Bolan formed upon departing John's Children, were about to release their third album, *Unicorn*, a total sonic departure from its predecessors. Privately, Bolan was concerned about its reception, particularly amongst the denimed, beaded hordes who claimed the band as their own.

In truth, Bolan's transition from acoustic Tolkien-esque whimsy to electric Tolkien-esque whimsy was barely noticeable – not because Marc and producer Visconti hid it, but because even then, two years before he erupted as the Seventies' first teen idol, Bolan's words and music were capable of transporting the listener to any place he wanted them to go.

It was time travel rather than space; Bolan's specialty was distorting

dimensions, to the point where it seemed perfectly natural for him to serenade the "torch girl of the marshes" to the roar of cacophonic guitars (1970's "Elemental Child"), to yammer medieval mania for a modern "Mustang Ford", to invoke the "Warlord of the Royal Crocodiles".

He reveled in the same reversed anachronisms as Erich von Daniken had so recently pronounced to be evidence of advanced civilizations visiting primitive man. But while von Danikin contented himself with the discovery of electric batteries in ancient silt, Bolan sang of dinosaurs devouring motor cars ("Suneye"). For von Daniken, the timeslip was tantalising hypothesis. For Bolan, it was reality.

Like his lyrics, Bolan's guitar playing defied convention. At a time when Jimi Hendrix was the yardstick by which a musician's prowess was to be measured, Bolan was a rank outsider. But though he lacked Hendrix's technique, he more than matched him for imagination. Hendrix took acid to by-pass the conventions of guitar playing, to help him see beyond the instrument's capabilities, and into the realms of its possibilities.

Bolan had that same insight – but he played straight. And another difference. Hendrix remained at the mercy of his intake – if an audience didn't react by the time the acid kicked in, he'd remain bummed out for the rest of the show. Bolan, faced by similar apathy, would simply go up another gear and *force* the crowd to go wild. Hendrix needed something to put him into orbit. Marc was already out there.

Tyrannosaurus Rex flourished from the start, and in 1968 – the same year, remember, as *Saucerful of Secrets* – the duo of Bolan and Steve Peregrine Took released their first album, *My People Were Fair and Had Sky in their Hair... but Now They're Content to Wear Stars on their Brows* (even the title reflected Bolan's innate wordiness).

In sonic terms, *My People* more than matched the aural energies of the duo's contemporaries, but with one major difference. Other bands, by their own admission (and this includes the likes of Pink Floyd and Hendrix) deliberately set out to sound "weird". Tyrannosaurus Rex sounded that way by nature. They embraced the cosmos simply by being.

The other thing which set Bolan apart from his underground peers was his refusal to take his lyrics for granted, a gift which arguably peaked on 1971's *Electric Warrior* album. In Pink Floyd's hands, a song called "Cosmic Dancer" would have meandered endlessly, very cosmic but scarcely danceable. In Bolan's, it reflected his thoughts on reincarnation (bucking the time/space continuum again), and though you still couldn't dance, you could at least smooch.

Likewise, "Planet Queen" could – and, bearing in mind the close friendship which existed between the two men, *should* – have pre-empted David Bowie's own galactic tease by the six incandescent months which separated Bolan's breakthrough from Ziggy's.

But again, Marc skipped the obvious; not until after Bowie had unleashed the leper messiah on the Earth did Marc begin writing of "The Ballrooms of Mars" and *mean* it. And by that time, the very definitions of Space Rock had been irrevocably altered.

The original Tyrannosaurus Rex line-up – Bolan and Took – broke up following the band's first American tour. The band had never recorded any of Took's own songs, and that caused some disharmony – especially after Took took his work elsewhere.

Twink, future Pink Fairy, but currently drummer with beat boom survivors the Pretty Things, was recording a solo album, and Took was frequently at the studio with him, playing guitar and contributing two songs to what became *Think Pink* – "Three Little Piggies" and "The Sparrow is the Sign".

But the bulk of the problems were social rather than musical – the two musicians hung with very different crowds, Marc spending time with his girlfriend June; Steve plying his body with chemicals (and calling on Bolan when he was run in by the law), and spending time with – well, like-minded fellows.

"I used to go out and jam occasionally with the Deviants and the Pretty Things," Took told the *NME* in 1972. "[But our] management would come and say 'boy, don't go and jam with this group, it's bad for the image'." And Took would simply stare at them incredulously. "What image? I'm Steve Took, well-known drug addict!"

The Social Deviants were the archetypal rebels, icons in search of an iconoclast. Their leader, the corkscrew haired Mick Farren's earliest bands, he remembers, were all "greasy anti-socials" with names like the Mafia, playing hard-drinking R&B a few circuits down from the nascent Stones and Pretty Things. Those early bands aspired to rise above their station – the Deviants seemed determined to sink below it.

As a musician and a writer, Farren was constantly colliding with his own destiny. *The Tale of Willy's Rats*, his 1974 novel of rock'n'roll struggle and stardom, was based on Farren's own truth, albeit "a highly distorted truth". It is the one rock'n'roll history which remains compulsory reading.

An early contributor to *IT*, Farren was also present at the birth of *Oz*, the hyper-underground magazine whose duty it was to go where even the established satirical press feared to tread. Read the authorized history of *Private Eye*, *Oz's* only real rival and the sole modern survivor of a host of similar publications, and *Oz*'s short life is picked to untidy ribbons. It wasn't only the establishment who reveled in *Oz*'s demise – crushed beneath the weight of Britain's dinosaurian obscene publications act.

Farren moved on to the underground comic *Nasty Tales*, founded with cartoonist Edward Barker. That got busted as well.

He freelanced for the *NME* throughout the paper's early 1970s' heyday, at the same time as establishing himself amongst Britain's leading science fiction authors. And there, too, he couldn't escape the past. His visions of a society ruled by robots, of android sex and the alien nation all had their roots in his early rock'n'roll.

With and without the Deviants, Farren was a regular on the UK festival circuit – when he retired from "active musicianship" in 1971, he organized the now legendary Phun City, staged over three days at the end of July, 1971, on Ecclesden Common, near Worthing. Even more than *Oz* and *IT*, Phun City summed up the Farren zeitgeist.

He'd dug the MC5 since Day One, long before they shared a bill with the Deviants and the Third Ear Band at "some swimming baths in North London", so they came over for Phun City to joust with Free and Mungo Jerry. The Broughtons were there, and the eternal Pink Fairies, the Pretty Things and Steve Peregrine Took, Kevin Ayers, Mighty Baby, the Demon Fuzz... and a host of names which even archaeologists seldom recognize today.

"What a great gig!" remembers Andy Dunkley. "Like a lot of those things, it developed into a free festival. Bands were going onstage for free and refusing to appear before the cameras (Radio Caroline were filming the event), and I remember when the MC5 came on, I was in the corner in my DJ booth and I heard Fred Smith turn to Rob Tyner and say 'man, this is gonna be a weird one!'" And like most of the things Farren got involved in at that time, it was.

The first Deviants line-up flickered for less than a year, an idea in search of ideals, and armed with a light show which would have been impressive if it hadn't been so dangerous. From atop the home-made wooden towers which swayed precariously in even the slightest breeze, Alex Stowell projected a kaleidoscope onto his buddies – whilst praying that the next gust didn't project him onto them as well!

Despite their obvious ambition ("most bands wanted to get fucked up most nights. We wanted to get fucked up every night!") the Deviants – who dumped the "Social" part of their name when guitarist Clive Maldoon was replaced by Sid Bishop – spent most of 1966 hurtling between ill (or non-) paying gigs, and Farren admits that they might have run hopelessly aground had he and drummer Russell Hunter not stumbled across the ever-enterprising owner of *IT*, Nigel Samuel.

Maybe it was the Deviants' flair which appealed – they were, after all, the only band around who boasted two bassists ('because we already had one, then another one wanted to join and because we liked him, we said yes"). Maybe it was their company. Or maybe it was their drugs. Samuel handed over seven hundred pounds, and when the Deviants recorded their album, he set up a label to release it on.

Underground Impressarios was not the first independent record company in Britain – Andrew Oldham's Immediate and Mike Vernon's Blue Horizon both beat it to the punch. But it was the first *true* independent, and it was visionary to boot. Original pressings of *Ptoof!* came packaged within a monstrous poster sleeve, the graphic precursor of *Space Ritual*, and a host of similar artistic behemoths.

There was no major label distribution deal waiting in the wings; instead, the album was distributed through *IT* and *Oz*, it was sold at gigs, and when Farren got a job at UFO, he sold it there as well.

In the end, some 8,000 copies were passed into circulation, more than enough for Decca, the home of the Stones, to pick it up for a major release. The Deviants had arrived.

But they didn't stick around. In April, they played the Technicolour Dream, dishevelled and decidedly damaged; by May, they had all but disintegrated. Farren, Hunter and guitarist Sid Bishop alone remained from the original squad, but bolstered by Farren's flatmate (and fellow UFO hand) Duncan "Sandy" Sanderson, and keyboard player Dennis Hughes, they swiftly summoned up the energy to make a second album, *Disposable*.

Farren once described *Disposable* as "a methedrine monster", a series of freak-form jams which did or didn't resolve themselves into riffs seemingly at random. The sound of the Deviants had always hinted at violence, but *Disposable* – constituting in more-or-less equal parts, the rage of the Fugs, the suss of Frank Zappa, and the ambition of a bad-tempered Airplane – went beyond simple contemplation.

If ever a record should have been charged with assault, it was *Disposable*. Certainly, it took just one listen for Decca to determine that once was more than enough (and besides, they'd had enough of this hippy-shit from the Stones. *Satanic Majesties' Request* was looming, and the top dogs at Decca hated it). *Disposable* turned up on another self-made indy, Stable, and the Deviants soldiered on.

Some of them did, anyway. After over a year of comparative stability, the Deviants lost Sid Bishop to the joys of fatherhood. He later turned up in a rock'n'roll revival band, Bishop's Big Boppers, and apparently also wrote a history of the Gibson guitar. And there's a peculiar legend about how he turns up on Eno's second solo album, in the bridge between "True Wheel" and "China My China", a disembodied name floating in the synthesized radio ether. It doesn't really make sense – it was Eno's first album which boasted a Deviant in its credits, but that's another story entirely.

The Deviants marched on. In Bishop's place, manager Jamie Mandelkau recruited a guitarist he knew from his Vancouver hometown, Paul Rudolph. Paul arrived in England with "two guitars and a change of

clothes" (actually socks and T-shirt), and now the Deviants set to work with a remarkably ill-timed vengeance – a vengeance which swiftly brought them spiralling into the orbit of Steve Took and Twink – founder members of the Pink (as in the color of their velvet jackets) Fairies.

Although the original Fairies were the Essex-based R&B band which first brought Twink to pop prominence, the *Pink* Fairies were a gang in a way, a loose gaggle of musicians who would come together in the dives of swinging London to plot revolution. Indeed, their full title, coined with typical swaggering aplomb, was the Pink Fairies Motorcycle Club & All-Star Rock'n'Roll Band, and they lived up to it with the passion of zealots.

The club had a floating membership, centered around Twink and his then-current band, the Pretty Things, Took and the Deviants, but open to anyone else who got his or her jollies from laughing at King Crimson – as the Fairies did at the new-born Crimson's Speakeasy showcase. "Every time Crimson played a quiet song," remembers Farren, "Twink would be up shouting for 'Nadine'!"

"Actually it was just a drinking club," smiles Twink. "just hanging out together, going out, getting drunk and falling about. Then we started doing gigs together, jamming, and it just became more musical from there."

The first glimmerings of this musical ambition came when the Deviants joined Steve Took amongst the backing for Twink's *Think Pink*, one more step in their suddenly hatched vision of world conquest.

In short order, the Deviants headlined a show on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, doing their bit for Christian Aid Week; hit every festival they could crash their way into; they even grabbed a proper record deal, with the newly-launched Transatlantic, and it didn't really dawn on them that a label whose specialty was English folk would not really have much idea what to do with a still-stoned, daily-drunken gang of hippies, whose third (self-titled) album was wrapped inside a picture of a heavily made-up nun suggestively tonguing a Lyons Maid Rocket icepop.

The Deviants was recorded during July, 1969, coinciding – as Farren's liner notes pointed out – with the Stones' free gig in Hyde Park (which also figures in the saga, highly distorted again, of course); and the violent subjugation of the so-called People's Park in Berkeley. (Recording ended too soon to catch the moon landing as well.)

And although it was belated, the record was to stand as the Deviants' statement of intent... and that of the entire counter-culture.

"For the past 13 years," wrote Farren in the album's liner notes, "Rock & Roll has been the secret language of a generation, despite lapses into gibberish and sidetracks into academic obscurity. Rock & Roll is a secret language that the rulers cannot understand." The generation gap, the cliched division of young from old which was once blamed for every

breakdown in societal communication, was suddenly no longer a simple gap, now it was a yawning void.

But it was not a chronological battle any more. It was ideological. You could be 18, and gung-ho in 'Nam; you could be 50, and out of your tree on acid. Age was no longer at issue. It was vision which mattered.

"We are the people who pervert your children," confessed Farren in "The People Suite" (a two minute suite! Brilliant!), as Rudolph's guitar leaped from speaker to speaker, and if the sonic snarl of the Deviants seems a light years away from the tranquil cosmic musings of the Floyd, space itself wasn't that gentle either – as the crew of Apollo Unlucky-Thirteen discovered.

Near-death experiences are not pleasant at the best of times. To endure one whilst sitting, floating in a tin-can (far above the world)... maybe "Death of a Dream Machine", midway through *The Deviants*, was prophetic after all. Fifteen years later, the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded shortly after lift-off, stunning America, and throwing the space program into absolute disarray. Everywhere, the same words were repeated – "it was just a routine mission"... but that is when the unknown is at its most dangerous, when its secrets are taken for granted. And for all man's advances, space remains unknown. Or, as Farren sang in 1969, "We left it in a cellar where it subsequently died."

The Deviants met their own end in, of all places, Canada. They'd had a good few months on the London scene circuit; when Jamie Mandelkau suggested that Paul Rudolph be given a homecoming concert in Vancouver, the Deviants gladly agreed.

Money was tight – the band could only afford one-way air tickets. But they were playing three nights at the Colonial Ballroom, and *that* sounded impressive. Sure they'd make enough for their return trip... wouldn't they?

No. The shows were a disaster, and suddenly, Rudolph, Sanderson and Hunter found themselves stranded in North America, living off whatever local largess they could find, and instead of saving their money, using it to finance a journey south... to the Promised Land, San Francisco. They later told writer Pete Frame that they'd been "looking for the pot of gold". Instead, they simply found the pot.

Farren, meanwhile, *had* grabbed the wherewithal to make his way back to London, and immediately threw himself back into the Pink Fairies Motorcycle Club as it set about fulfilling the second part of its name. It was time to become an All-Star Rock'n'Roll Band for real!

The Pink Fairies – Twink, Took, Farren and Twink's girlfriend Silva Darling on occasional keyboards (an instrument, incidentally, which she had never played in her life) made their musical debut at Manchester University. First show – only show.

"There was no music as such," Twink recollects. "We had no rehearsals, we had no idea what we were going to do. It ended up with Mick talking to the audience, I was playing drums and doing other crazy things like running around, pulling my pants down, and Steve was singing into a mike to another part of the audience. The concert ended with us standing in the middle of the audience, pulling down our trousers, and farting in people's faces. It was unbelievable!

"I think it was at that point that I realized that the Pink Fairies we had been planning wasn't going to work."

The unholy trinity of Farren, Took and Twink was preserved on vinyl, however, courtesy of both *Think Pink* and a Mick Farren solo album, the now deservedly-legendary *Mona: The Carnivorous Circus.* The title track (part two), in fact, was virtually a Took solo turn, as he recounted his brief sojourn awaiting Her Majesty's Pleasure – as the British so delicately refer to police custody – at Ashford Remand Centre, following his last drug bust. His performance, incidentally, was credited to Shagrat the Vagrant.

Shagrat is the evil orc captain in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and though Took's friends insist that the two had little in common, the name fit Took's next *band* like a glove.

Shagrat, like the embryonic Pink Fairies before them, played just one gig – at Phun City. With Larry Wallis and Tim Taylor dropping by from the recently disbanded Entire Sioux Nation – low-key festival favorites during '68-'69 – Shagrat played a set which is alternately remembered as an absolute shambles, or... an absolute shambles. But they also recorded a little, and early in the 1990s (a decade after Took's death), "Peppermint Flipstick" appeared as a single... close to six minutes of doomy freak-rock which Bolan biographer Mark Paytress alleges was "apparently inspired by a... combination of 'Interstellar Overdrive' and a Cadbury's Chocolate Flake commercial."

Took fled to another short-lived band, again with Wallis in attendance (and Chicken Shack's drummer on tambourine), but even as his erstwhile bandmate, Marc Bolan, was rocketing to the top of the charts, all Took could muster was a handful of solo concerts during 1971 – 72.

"It was reported in the papers that I was 'back on the road after straightening my head out'," he complained at the time. "This is entirely untrue. I haven't been able to straighten my head out at all."

In 1972, Took returned to the studio with Duncan Sanderson, Russell Hunter and ex-Juniors' Eyes guitarist Mick Wayne, under the auspices of Bolan's own former manager, Tony Secunda. A clutch of songs, including a rerecorded "Amanda", were tackled, but despite the reported interest of Warner Brothers (Marc Bolan's US label), the session was never com-

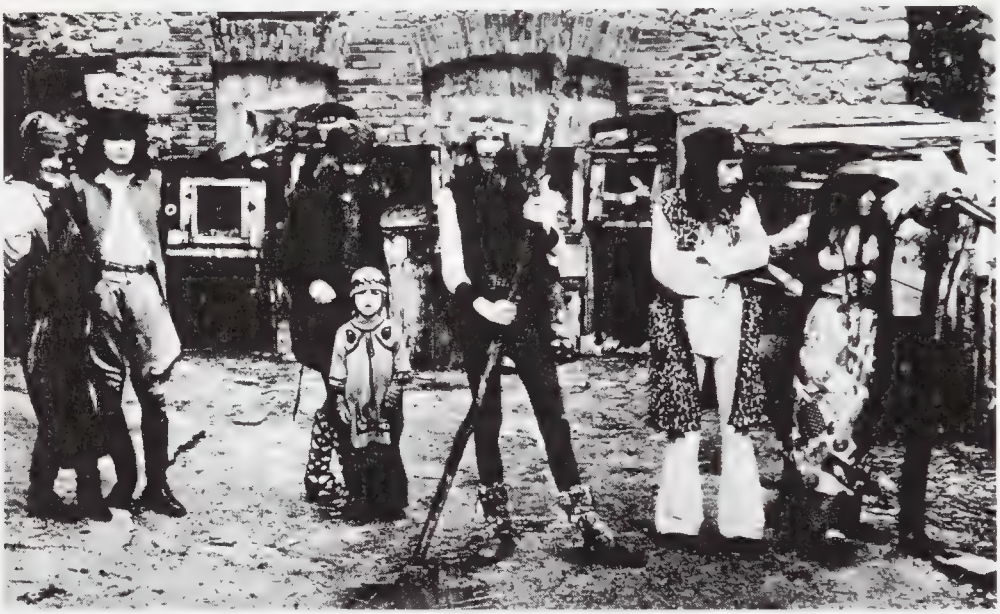
pleted. Another attempt at recording, Took solo and stoned and falling off his chair, was equally abortive, at least in "commercial" terms. Two decades later, however, the release of "The MIssing Link" belatedly stake took's claim not only to have generated much of Tyrannosaurus Rex's early ambience, but also to have created his own brand of spaced out space rock (and on acoustic guitar yet!). At the time, however, there were no takers, and Took drifted through the remainder of the 1970s, a sad, shadowy, figure.

"Steve lived in my house for about two years," remembers Nik Turner, "and I looked after him, and tried to get him off drugs, and it worked – I weaned him off, but as soon as he got back to London, he was right back onto it; he was amongst all his friends, who were saying 'go on, Tookie, have this one, have that one, have them all... you can take more drugs than anybody I know.' And he'd do it."

Took died on October 27th, 1980, a little over three years after Bolan was killed in a car accident. A royalty check had just arrived, and Took spent it on a cocktail of morphine and magic mushrooms. Awakening in the night, he reached out for a cherry. The fruit lodged in his mushroom-numbed throat and when he was found the following morning, Steve Peregrine Took had choked to death.

chapter four

Songs from the Bottom of a Well



"I was in a taxi cab one day." Daevid Allen smiled above his trademark bushy goatee beard. "And there I met a small green man, who sang me a small green song."

The story of Gong is not the story of a band, nor the story of a planet. The beauty of Gong, at least throughout the four album/five year period during which Daevid Allen's muse was at its peak, was that even within the tightly bound strictures of his own Planet Gong mythology, there was room for private maneuver.

At the conclusion of part one, Zero the Hero is offering Witch Yoni's pussy some fish and chips. A sexual reference? Only moments later, after all, his head will fly away through "the quim of the moon", to "seventh heaven, where is perpetual orgasm", and the notion of the universe as one infinite sexual act is certainly as unique an idea as any.

To reduce the Planet Gong trilogy to any one level, however, is to miss so many others, particularly as the trilogy is only a trilogy if the listener adheres to the three albums' own inner chronology.

Many of the ideas broached on *Radio Gnome Invisible Part One – The*

Flying Teapot, *Angel's Egg* and *You* had already surfaced in 1970's *Magick Brother* and the following year's *Camembert Electrique*, while Daevid Allen himself had at least been populating the planet Gong since the mid-1960s, when he suggested calling an earlier band Dingo Virgin & the Foreskins. His bandmates preferred Soft Machine, and Dingo Virgin later became one of Allen's Gong aliases (another, Bert Camembert, was a sly poke at the cheesy band leader Bert Kaempfert).

Born in Melbourne, Australia, Allen moved to Paris with his girlfriend, Gilli Smyth, in 1961. The pair lived aboard a houseboat on the Quai d'Orsay, dropped acid and mescaline, and made music from tape loops – *Musique Concrete*. Allen had already worked with William Burroughs. He was a freak long before anyone knew what freaks were.

Allen was introduced to a young Robert Wyatt by a mutual friend, drummer George Niedorf. Wyatt was from the English city of Canterbury, a shy tourist trap of a city, whose University – like so many in England in the early 1960s! – was less a seat of Higher Learning than it was a den of Rebellious Plotting. Wyatt was as rebellious as the best of them.

Allen liked him immediately, and invited Wyatt and another friend, Hugh Hopper, over to visit. Then he played them *Musique Concrete*. The effect was shattering – as journalist Pete Frame later remarked, "Pow! Two more recruits to ye olde youth-culture revolution."

Dubbing themselves the Daevid Allen Trio, Allen, Wyatt and Hopper began working on tapes of their own (recordings of these primitive prolusions have reportedly surfaced, and are in the process of being released. Maybe they already have been by now!). Later, with Wyatt having returned to Canterbury with his own mane of shaggy, pre-Beatles long hair, Hopper remained in Paris, making further tapes with Allen.

Back home, Wyatt put together the first line-up of the Wilde Flowers, the foundation stone upon which the entire "Canterbury Scene" of the mid-late Sixties would be built, and the springboard from which both Caravan and the Soft Machine would eventually take flight. At different times, the band included Wyatt, Kevin Ayers, Richard Sinclair, Richard Coughlan, Pye Hastings, and the newly-returned Hugh Hopper.

Although he remained in close contact, Daevid Allen tended to stay out of his new cohorts' earliest musical efforts, preferring to exercise his influence through a bottomless supply of psychedelic drugs and philosophies – neither of which would have been that suitable onstage with Wilde Flowers. Their first gig, at the Bear & Key Hotel in neighboring Whitstable, saw them performing Chuck Berry and Beatles covers... three years later, their repertoire included "You Put A Spell On Me", "Sunny" and "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag".

Ayers was first to quit the Flowers, in 1965; Wyatt followed a year later, and with Allen (himself now based permanently in Canterbury) the

irresistible psychedelic magnet to which both gravitated, the arrival within their ranks of organist Mike Ratledge and a passing Californian named Larry Nolan, prompted some serious rehearsals.

What to call the band? Dingo Virgin & the Foreskins was too far out even by liberated Canterbury standards; Mr Head and the Bishops of Canterbury both had their adherents, but... what about the Soft Machine? In Allen's footsteps, Ratledge (a BA in Philosophy and Psychology) had been reading William Burroughs, and with Allen having sought out his former mentor's permission, the name stuck.

Money was no obstacle! Vacationing in Majorca during the period immediately before the new band came together, Wyatt and Ayers ran into an Oklahoma spectacle manufacturer named Wes. They impressed him – with their ideas, with their exuberance, with whatever... now he was mailing them $100 bills on a regular basis, and if Soft Machine weren't the best-*known* band on the Canterbury scene, they were certainly the best-*equipped*. Wes was allegedly last heard of joining the Children of God.

Larry Nolan quit just months into the new band's lifespan, leaving Allen to assume full guitar duties. He admits that his guitar playing was rudimentary... "embarrassing" is how he puts it; his role in the Softs was more spiritual and organizational than musical. Well connected on the London underground, it was Allen who tied the Softs into the UFO/*IT* circuit and throughout the early part of 1967 the band played a string of increasingly bizarre shows – to increasingly uncomfortable audiences.

Richard Thompson, sharing the same circuit as the Softs as guitarist with the young Fairport Convention, remembers the period as one of "incredible open-mindedness. The music business didn't know what it had on its hands, so it was signing up anything, and calling everything psychedelic. The audiences felt the same way – they were prepared to listen to anything, just in case it turned out to be cool!"

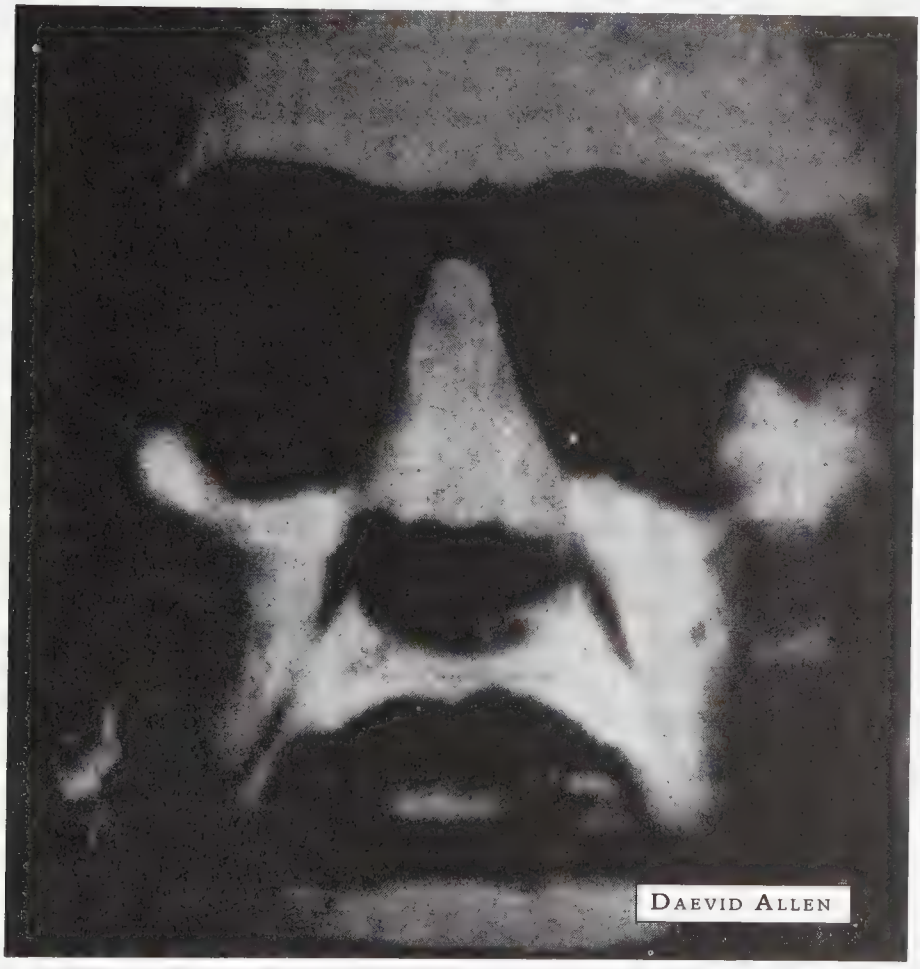
The Soft Machine were the exception which proved the rule. They did land a manager, whom they shared with Jimi Hendrix – Mike Jeffreys; through him, they also found a producer, Chas Chandler, and a record deal, with Polydor.

But the band's musical vision, dark, twisted, dense, prone to elongated excursions which seldom went where you expected them to, were beyond the ken of any but the freakiest listeners. "Would you feed your daughter to the Soft Machine?" asked the cover of Polydor's first band biog.

Even their attempts at writing pop material – Ayers' "Love Makes Sweet Music", their first (and only!) Polydor single – came at the subject from a distinctly half-cocked angle, even earning a rebuke from Polydor

over the lyric "...let your dreams get wetter than wine". The offending dampness was changed to "better" before the song was recorded.

The band chopped through producers like a knife through butter. The b-side of the single, the fiendish "Feelin' Reelin' Squealin'", was produced by Kim Fowley (who also oversaw a one-off single by a joint Softs/Them project, the Freaks of Nature); when the Softs returned to the studio in April, 1967, Giorgio Gomelsky (the man who discovered the Yardbirds!) was at the helm, listening in alleged agony while Allen tore off "the worst guitar I've ever played." The sessions, Daevid insists, "were just a mortal embarrassment to me."



DAEVID ALLEN

Polydor passed on the opportunity to release further Soft Machine material; British audiences were becoming increasingly wary of going to see the band play live; finally, shortly after their appearance at the Technicolour Dream, the group decamped *en masse* for St Tropez.

There they immediately linked up with the local *avant-garde* scene,

one in which musical accessibility was, if anything, something to be avoided. Throughout July, 1967, the Softs were involved in Alan Zion's production of Picasso's *Desire Attrape Par La Queue* at the Festival of Free Expression, suffered a police raid (captured on the *Mystery and the History of the Planet G**g* collection) and in September they returned to England in at least partial triumph, to play the Edinburgh Festival. Which is where the UK immigration authorities stepped in.

Daevid Allen's passport was out of order, his work permit was out of order, his *appearance* was out of order. The Australian was barred from re-entering Great Britain, and returned to Paris while the Softs played Edinburgh as a three piece. Shortly after, Allen announced he was leaving the band.

"I think it was a blessing in disguise, because I was really getting sucked into the scene there," Allen later admitted. Indeed, "every single person in the Soft Machine was on an ego trip," he later told journalist Pete Frame. "We were all gunning for each other; it was like jungle warfare until I left."

Like the Floyd without Barrett and the Nice without O'List, the Softs without Allen swiftly lost much of their original playfulness – tracing the progression from their first John Peel session, recorded in December 1967, to their debut album four months later, the future direction of the Softs (Ayers' characteristically laconic contributions notwithstanding) was already apparent. Compare it to the Gomelsky demos, which publicly resurfaced during the early 1970s (in various forms, under various titles, most recently *Jet Propelled Photograph*), and it could be a different band.

And in many ways, it was. It was not that Wyatt's voice (then and now) was very much an acquired taste; nor even that the group was prone to surf away on the most unintelligible instrumental tangents at the drop of a hi-hat. Soft Machine were simply too clever for their own good, and their apparent adoption by American audiences (they toured the country ceaselessly throughout the first half of 1968, often opening for Jimi Hendrix) only isolated British listeners even further.

Soft Machine One, the band's first LP, wasn't even given a UK release, and for many listeners, their first true meeting with the band came when Wyatt, Ratledge and Hopper were among the musicians drafted in to flesh out three of Syd Barrett's skeletal *Madcap Laughs* sessions. They appear on "Love You", "No Good Trying" and, released many years later (on *Opel*), an early run-through of "Octopus", "Clowns and Jugglers".

Allen, meanwhile, was back on the houseboat with Gilli Smyth, appearing regularly at the Vielle Grille, on the Left bank, and looking to establish "situations where as many people as possible can play and be

together." Over the next six months, he was constantly putting together new, ever vaster, aggregations of stoned immaculates, then booking into Parisian nightclubs to improvise what Allen, even then, called "total space music" for as long as was humanly possible. One unit was called Banana Moon, another was Gong.

It was a blissful scene – a little anarchic, a little political, very typically Sixties.

And then Paris exploded.

Banana Moon were actually performing in front of director Jerome Lerrousaz's cameras at the time – footage apparently exists of the band's liquid lightshow being projected onto the burning barricades while the band handed out teddy bears to militia men, and Allen recited a poem, "I Don't Smoke the Banana".

In the authoritarian crackdown which cleaned up student riot and rioter alike, warrants were issued for the arrest of Allen, Smythe and Banana Moon's rhythm section of Patrick Fontaine and drummer Marc Heart. They fled to the Majorcan island of Deya; they returned in April, 1969, and purchased an old mill in the south of France.

Allen and Smyth had changed during their exile. It wasn't simply that the spirit of the old freak-out jams had been lost, crushed beneath the batons and teargas of the Gendarmerie. The couple's own musical ideas had become more regimented over recent months, to the point where their jams, if not more disciplined, were at least becoming more musical. Now it wasn't enough to simply play till you dropped. You had to play well too. Not for nothing did Allen pin a photograph of Syd Barrett to his guitar amp – indeed, Allen happily admitted that his own "glissando" guitar style owed as much to Syd as to anyone. No-one else, after all, did so much to pioneer a whirling combination of slide and echo!

Musicians of the caliber of saxophonist Didier Malherbe (*aka* Bloomdido Bad de Grasse), pianist Burton Green, bassist Christian Tritsche, and drummers Pip Pyle (from Carol Grimes' Delivery) and Laurie Allan were guesting regularly with Allen and Smyth.

Then came a deal with BYG Records, and armed with a clutch of Smyth's songs, the duo entered the studio with a loose conglomeration built around Green, Carl Freeman, Dieter Gewissler, Burton Green and Charles Hayward – moving into Allen's orbit following two years with Quiet Sun. Hayward's frantic drumming underpins much of *Magick Brother, Mystic Sister*, the first album by Daevid Allen and Gong, and the record which introduced the world, albeit fleetingly, to the mysterious denizens of the Planet Gong.

Doodles smother the inside of the album's gatefold jacket, odd little figures with names like the Good Witch Yoni, Fred the Fish, and the Pothead Pixies.

"Radio Gnome [Invisible]", Allen was to explain two years later, in the liner notes to Gong's *Flying Teapot* album, "is a kind of telepathic pirate radio which transmits from a flying teapot... from [the] Planet Gong," and is piloted by Pothead Pixies.

Early Gong albums, hinting but never focussing upon the Pixies and their Planet, struggled to find more than a bemused cult audience in the UK. Neither *Magick Brother*, nor the following year's soundtrack to Jerome Laperrousaz's motorcycle movie *Continental Circus*, nor a collaboration with Dashiell Hedayat, *Obsolete*, were released outside of France, and when Gong arrived at Glastonbury in June, 1971, it was as an all-but unknown quantity.

"This band has come all the way from Paris just to do this gig," Andy Dunkley announced as Gong took the stage. "Included in this band is a gentleman named Daevid Allen, who used to be lead guitarist with the Soft Machine. [He had also recently appeared at the Soft Machine & Friends concert at the Roundhouse.] This is Daevid Allen and Gong."

The band's set, preserved in part on the *Glastonbury Fayre* album (complete with a generator breakdown), was presented as one otherwise unbroken performance – a story, as Dunkley put it during that interruption. "I don't know if they'll start again, or if they'll carry on from where they left off," he told the audience as the band prepared to return to the stage. "But if you can remember what happened before, it might help." Gilli's space whispers aside, there had not yet been a word of coherent dialogue spoken.

Gong returned to the UK in November, when they toured with Kevin Ayers as a semi-permanent houseguest. He'd quit Soft Machine following *One*, in late 1968, sold his bass to Jimi Hendrix's drummer, and begun outfitting a home studio.

Within a year, his first solo album, the effervescent *Joy of a Toy* had appeared, and the following year, Ayers began working with a new band, the Whole World – complete with bassist Mike Oldfield and keyboardist David Bedford.

The Whole World recorded two albums but by mid-1971 had splintered (Bedford promptly recorded what remains the lost classic of the extra-terrestrial *avant-garde*, the spellbinding *Nurses Song With Elephants*). Gong, on the other hand, were just completing their most fully realized album yet, *Camembert Electrique*, populating it not only with an ever-expanding coterie of Potheads, but also with a veritable Who's Who of Aliases – Submarine Captain Christian Tritsch, Shakti Yoni Smyth, Dingo Virgin *et al.*

Allen had also released his first solo album, the genial *Banana Moon*, which not only featured a swarming cover of the Soft Machine's "Memo-

ries", it also boasted guest appearances from Robert Wyatt, Maggie Bell, Gary Wright and Archie Leggett, all of whom stayed for varying periods of time at the growing Gong commune in the Normandy woods. Ayers slipped seamlessly into so relaxed an atmosphere.

Camembert Electrique remains archetypal Gong, an impression conveyed not only by the sheer accessibility of its finest moments, nor by the then-bizarre notion of mailing out cheese-scented promos to journalists, but also by the stylish manner in which it introduced Gong to the British

GONG

public at large, three years later.

Repackaged at a bargain 59p, or less than the price of a single, *Camembert* sold to convert and curious alike. When Gong toured the country in 1974, a goodly proportion of their audience was drawn from the ranks of the happy bargain-hunters. Then, it was just a matter of letting them catch up with all that had taken place in the meantime....

Recorded with producer Gomelsky, himself now firmly entrenched in the Parisian scene, *Camembert* saw Gong (with Allen finally established as the band's principle writer) ranging from quite conventional pop (the philosophical "Tried So Hard", the storming "You Can't Kill Me"), through the seductive "Selene", and Smyth's typically surreal "Mister Long Shanks..." and onto the full-blown Space Rock of "Fohat Digs Holes In Space".

Radio Gnome station IDs and assorted slices of wet cheese delirium opened and closed each side, and throughout, Smyth and Malherbe worked in such close harmony that it was often difficult to determine

where one's voice ended and the other's instrument began – check the bridge between "Tropical Fish" and "Selene".

Ayers remained with Gong until February, 1972, when he returned to England and began piecing together what would eventually become Decadence, with Archie Leggett, drummer Eddie Sparrow, and a dazzling young guitarist named Steve Hillage.

Time and tradition play strange games on musical history. Hillage's first band of note, Uriel, flowered in London during 1967-68, recorded an eponymous album under the name Arzachel, then splintered when Hillage enrolled at the University of Kent... in Canterbury.

Arzachel was not a particularly noteworthy effort, dawdling for the most part around the same quasi-classical avenues as Keith Emerson was then frequenting. Indeed, Hillage's next band, Khan, made the same mistake – with the same organist, David Stewart! Despite its promising title, and some gloriously spaced lyrics, 1972's *Space Shanties* is frighteningly po-faced, with anything beyond a snatch of (admittedly blistering) guitar at a real premium. It is Stewart's show through and through, and quite jazzy enough to presage his later involvement in the Hatfields.

It was his stint with Ayers, then, which finally brought Hillage to the fore. The final Whole World album, *Whatevershebringswesing*, had appeared earlier in the year, and much of the band's set was drawn either from this, or the soon-to-be-completed *Bananamour*.

But it was to be a short-lived union. In December, Decadence toured France; inevitably they met up with the Gong crowd, and when the band returned home, it was as a guitarist-less trio. Hillage – Stevie Hillside as Allen promptly rechristened him – remained in Normandy, throwing himself into what would become Gong's next album, part one of the Radio Gnome Invisible epic, *Flying Teapot*.

The *Camembert* line-up shattered around August, 1972, only for Allen, Smythe and now Hillage to reconvene a month or so later, with Di Stewart (vocals), Tim Blake (keyboards), Francis Moze (bass) and Rob Tait (drums), and producer Gomelsky gleefully egging them all on.

Gong signed to Virgin Records early in 1973, and perhaps no more mutually logical arrangement could be imagined. Founded by Simon Draper and Richard Branson, a mail order record dealer, Virgin was originally founded simply to market a privately produced album which Branson, apparently alone in the UK music industry, considered had a smidgen of commercial potential – forty minutes of one man instrumental doodling recorded by another former Ayers sidekick, Mike Oldfield.

Tubular Bells went on to become the biggest selling album of the year (if not the decade), remained on the UK chart for five full years, and couldn't even be dislodged from its perch at the top of the charts by

Oldfield's own follow-up, the much anticipated, but hatefully underrated *Hergest Ridge*.

Bells supplied the theme music to the movie *The Exorcist*, and a NASA documentary, *The Space Movie*. It became a TV special and an orchestral production, transformed Virgin overnight into the most visionary record label of the early/mid-1970s; gave fresh impetus to the careers of both producer Tom Newman, and long-time Oldfield/Ayers associate David Bedford; and finally, it launched Oldfield as arguably the most important *individual* musician of the pre-Punk era.

Hergest Ridge stands today amongst the most uncompromising discs in the entire "New Age" catalog (all the more remarkable when one considers that the term had still to be invented at the time!); a handful of skewed pop singles released on either side of it added to the young virtuoso's reputation; and his work on Bedford's justifiably acclaimed *Star's End* was so unanimously singled out for praise that Oldfield himself incorporated a piece of the work into his own *Boxed* compilation package.

But it was 1976's *Ommadawn*, or more precisely, the last ten minutes of side one of *Ommadawn*, which – even if he had never recorded a note before or since – was to vouchsafe Oldfield's reputation.

Building in layers of sound and effect, climaxing in an explosion of almost physical relief, and then subsiding back with a slowly fading drum, the collision of tribal beat, primal chant and shrieking guitar is stunningly simple, numbingly repetitive, and breathtakingly beautiful, heartbreaking in its intensity. Next to that single passage, even *Tubular Bells* seems a rubber band concerto.

Virgin's roster blossomed in the wake of Oldfield's success, until nothing was too weird, too oddball, too esoteric for Virgin – not even Gong. *Flying Teapot* became only the second album to appear on the label, after *Tubular Bells*, and if it wasn't ever likely to match its predecessors' success, still it suggested that there were more people tuning in to Radio Gnome Invisible than even Daevid Allen could have imagined.

The song cycle followed the Pixies adventures from the moment their teapot touched down in Tibet, onto Lawrence the Alien's prayer mat, though their eruption on the world music stage (under the auspices of the Great Yogi Banana Ananda), and the arrival of their greatest fan, Zero the Hero.

"But the PHPs don't wanna be worshipped, so they take Zero through the Land of Scat and magnetic fields of Bad de Grass where he... meets the Witch Yoni."

Can you follow the story without reading the sleeve notes? Probably not. But so many elements of *Flying Teapot* were drawn from past Gong

excursions; so many more (the introduction of Hi T Moonweed *aka* Tim Blake's Crystal Machine synth bank, for instance) would reappear later, that in retrospect it does all make sense... and as 1973 flowed on, the next installment of the saga was awaited with increasing impatience – and not a little wry amusement.

While later, more cynical, ears have – as *NME's* Angus Mackinnon complained, "unnecessarily maligned" the Gong mythos, it was, again in Mackinnon's words, "based on sound, well-intentioned philosophical tenets. Consider it... some sort of benign post-revolutionary survival kit...."

Angel's Egg, part two of the saga, was recorded in Gong's back garden, and released in November, promptly raising the group's UK profile to fresh new heights. Import shops bustled with copies of the early, French albums; a Gong theater tour was in the offing, and Allen was talking enthusiastically of publishing the entire history of the Planet Gong. Meanwhile, the new album seamlessly picked up from where *Teapot* left off, both in musical and narrative terms.

The face of Gong itself, however, was changing. During the short break between recording *Teapot* and *Angel's Egg*, Gong had again essentially splintered, with Allen and Smyth heading off on holiday for a few months, leaving Hillage, Blake and Malherbe to piece together a new band, Paragong, with drummer Pierre Moerlin and bassist Mike Howlett. (A Paragong track, the only recorded evidence available, later appeared on the Virgin sampler V. Hillage and Moerlin also joined Oldfield for a live presentation of *Tubular Bells*, in June, 1973).

The breach, of course, was not permanent, but when Allen and Smyth did reconvene their brainchild in June, 1973, for a John Peel session, it was with the Paragong line-up alongside them.

In this form, Gong toured the UK once again, appearing at the second Greasy Truckers party, at Dingwalls, but within six months, Smyth had quit again, to be replaced by actress Miquette Giraudy – best known for her role in *La Vallee*... Pink Floyd's *Obscured by Clouds*! It was time for Gong to bring the trilogy to its close.

Angel's Egg was recorded in the white heat of enthusiasm which swam around the *Teapot* album, its equilibrium unbroken even by the line-up changes. Close to a year, however, was to pass before Gong came to grips with the conclusion of the trilogy, and from a listener's point of view that album, *You*, truly marks the beginning of the end.

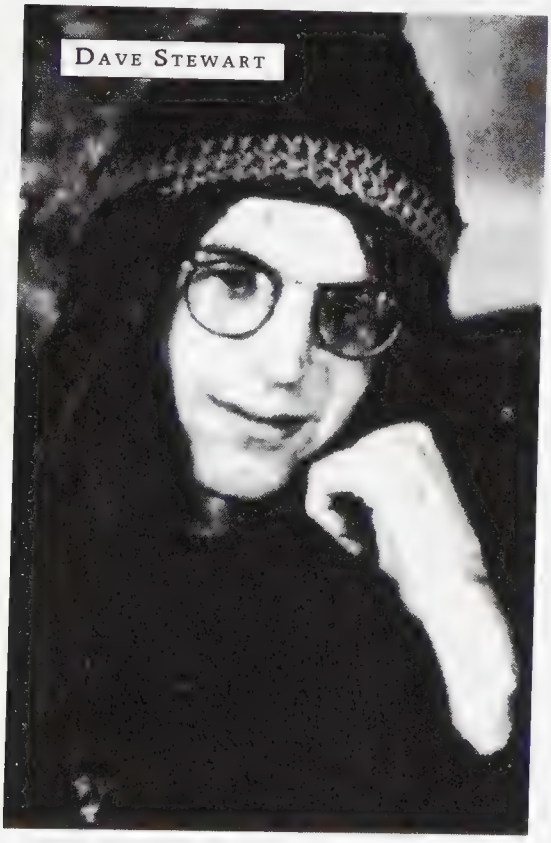
Gong's first conventional sleeve design (what happened to the pixie cartoons?) housed their first conventional album, one on which musicianship seemed finally to be getting the better of eccentricity, and what there was of that seemed forced and somehow faked.

Certainly the effortless tune-foolery of past records was missing, crushed by the weight of the actual concept, and only haphazardly struggling out of its embrace. Blake's majestic centerpiece "A Sprinkling of Clouds" aside, it is supremely ironic that the nearest the *You*-era Gong came to recapturing past glories was with a track which didn't even make the album!

"Where Have All The Flowers Gone", a typically Allen (and therefore, alien) attempt at writing a hit single, was abandoned in the studio, sometime before Steve Hillage got round to adding his guitar solo. Still it bristles with exuberance, however; exuberance, daftness and jollity – a delightful slice of comparative nonsense all round.

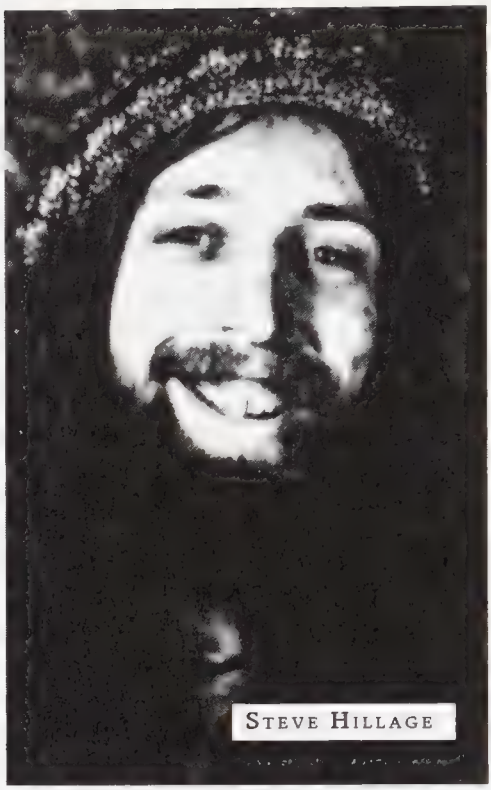
Exploding from the same sessions as produced the often po-faced *You*, it might indeed have provided Gong with the hit single Allen had often dreamed of – but had never got round to releasing. Certainly it would have dampened some of the confusion and criticism with which *You* was greeted, a gappy, goofy grin which would have reminded everyone why they so loved Gong in the first place. Because without it, it was clear to everyone that Gong was in serious trouble.

Steve Hillage's debut solo album, *Fish Rising*, recorded around the same time as *You* with the full Paragong line-up, is both a contemplative and a condemnatory album.



The theme of the album, of course, was fish. The musicians' instruments were renamed after them – batterfish drums, synfish keyboards, saxofish brass and, of course, a song called "Fish", which was about them. So, it was lighthearted, light-headed, light-everything, in fact, that *You* was not. It was revelatory, indeed, to hear precisely the same musicians as had labored so hard on *You* kick back and sound relaxed again – dismiss the absence of the Pixies and their Teapot, and *Fish Rising* was almost a Gong album by proxy.

If that is the case, it was to be the last one. Blake left


STEVE HILLAGE

Gong, for a solo career, the month before *Fish Rising* hit the stores, in March, 1975. Allen followed him out, claiming that he was forced to quit when he tried to follow his bandmates onstage in Cheltenham, only to encounter a force field completely surrounding the stage.

"It was the strangest experience... it felt like I was walking into a spongy rubber mattress, Startled, I tried again. Still couldn't make it." He decided to go for a walk, and never came back. (A less prosaic reason for Allen's abrupt departure, hinted at in subsequent interviews, is his growing annoyance with having to use a drummer. Interestingly, the sleeve for Allen's next album, *Good Morning*, reproduces a postcard he sent to Richard Branson praising a band he had just discovered playing acoustic Jethro Tull songs in Spain, Euterpe. They didn't have a drummer.)

After all these goings, it seemed pleasant to record an arrival – even if it was a drummer! Pierre Moerlin, the Strasbourg Conservatory percussionist who quit immediately after *Angel's Egg* (his replacements included Dave Stewart, in which form Gong recorded their final Peel session, in January, 1974), who returned for *You*, and who then left once again, was back one more time, to essentially take control of the band.

Gong's spring 1975 tour was undertaken largely to promote *Fish Rising*; that completed, the band scooped up Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason as producer, and returned to the studio to record *Shamal*, the first of a stream of increasingly horse-headed post-Allen Gong albums.

Just as happened during the making of *You*, the album – and the band – emerged from the studio traumatized and fragmented. In September, Gong headlined three nights at London's Marquee (excerpts from these shows appear on the *Live Etc* album). There, Hillage and Giraudy seemed the unquestioned leaders, spiritually and musically.

Three months later, they were out of the band, having contributed to just two tracks on the new album, "Wingful of Eyes" and "Bambooji". Hillage was rewarded with a sleeve credit which relegated him to the

ranks of session musicians and lighting engineers.

Without Hillage's delightfully dippy hand at the helm, *Shamal* set its sights deep into the studious music-for-music's-sake territory which Punk – in early 1976, a gathering firestorm on the rock'n'roll horizon – would so brutally dismiss. And though Gong continued, it was as just so much noodle soup.

"The first Gong album I ever bought," admits Sky Cries Mary's Roderick, perhaps the greatest of all Gong's modern-day spiritual successors, "was *Espresso II* (1978). It sounded like bad jazz – I couldn't figure out why anybody would compare our band to Gong!" By the time he finally heard the "real" Gong, Sky Cries Mary had already moved on.

Like the early Pinkwind axis, the classic (1971-74) Gong was less of a band than it was a philosophy, one whose musical sense was geared towards what can be generically pegged as Space Rock, but whose actual *raison d'etre* went far beyond anything quite so readily definable.

Even the sundry reunions of various trilogy-era members which have pocked the two decades since Gong broke up – most notably in 1977 (for the *Gong Est Mort* album), 1990 (*Gong – Live on TV*) and 1994, have only hinted at the true magic of the group. Like so many other bands, Gong seem not to realize there is more to a reunion than simply reconvening the members. You need to reconvene the mood which sustained them as well. An impossible task? Maybe... you try naming one band reunion which has been as musically and spiritually satisfying as the original model, then.

In terms of retaining Gong's own, once-burgeoning dalliance with popular success, the keys to the band's continued high profile were Steve Hillage and Tim Blake. Allen, whilst remaining highly visible through a series of albums, live shows and bands, has deliberately steered clear of his own past's more overt elements. Indeed, often, it seems, he goes out of his way to derail comparison, invoking Gong's name (via his Planet Gong, New York Gong and Gongmaison projects) more as a statement of fact than of intent.

Gilli Smyth's post-Pothead activities, even the often phenomenal Mother Gong, follow suit, reminding us, then, that Gong represents an entire planet, and there's a lot of very different things going on up there. History (this one included!) tends to record only a tiny fraction of these events – subsequent albums, recorded and released in comparative obscurity, detail the rest.

For Steve Hillage, life without Gong began with another stab at *Tubular Bells*, appearing alongside the Scottish national Orchestra at their performance of the mighty behemoth, and with L, a magnificent album which – like *Fish Rising* – showcased his guitar work in a way Gong never had. Two covers, the Beatles' "It's All Too Much" and

Donovan's "Hurdy Gurdy Man", bookended the set, which was recorded in upstate New York with producer Todd Rundgren – an eccentric coupling, but one which worked phenomenally well.

Much of *L* came together through improvisation – Rundgren himself later confessed that "while it was a musically rewarding album, it was difficult because... of not actually having it together when [Hillage] came in to do it." A notoriously fast worker, Rundgren was baffled by Hillage and partner Miquette Giraudy's insistence on waiting until things "felt" right before getting to work – the twelve minute "Lunar Musick Suite", for instance, could only be recorded during a full moon! Still, Rundgren was clearly impressed by it all – elements of *L* readily reappear on Rundgren's own next album, Utopia's *Ra*.

Fish Rising had already gone where no Gong member had dared go before – into the UK Top 40; *L* now soared into the Top 10, and even at the height of Punk Rock, Hillage retained both a commercial and critical sensibility which must have left many of his own contemporaries reeling. An even more delicious irony was proffered by Hillage's continued presence on Virgin – the currently silent Mike Oldfield aside, no more incongruous labelmate to the newly-signed Sex Pistols could be imagined!

Hillage arguably attained his peak, at least in Space Rock terms, with a BBC Radio concert recorded in December, 1976. He had always claimed to play in whichever direction the spiritual energies moved him, but thereafter, he seemed more willing, or able, to harness them himself. Both *Motivation Radio* and the Nick Mason-produced *Green*, his next two records, are best described as transitional, featuring on the one hand such astonishing work-outs as "Ether Ships" and "The Glorious OM Riff"; on the other, the calculated "Sea Nature" and "UFO Over Paris".

By the time he returned to the BBC concert hall, in April, 1979, then, Hillage's music was a kind of cosmic funk stew, drawing from his own heritage but translating it into wholly modern terms – the most successful blend of Freak-out and Funk since the American George Clinton first foresaw the possibilities embodied within such a collision was simultaneously such a child of its times that it was difficult even to draw parallels between the "old" and "new" style Steves. Perhaps it is best not to try.

Tim Blake was also active throughout the turbulent years at the end of the 1970s. Like Hillage, he guested on both Nik Turner's *Xitintoday* album and, joined by Didier Malherbe and an Anglo-French cast of several, the astro-bizarre *Clearlight Symphony* experimental disc; he also recorded a brace of albums which, alongside Hillage's earliest, stand today not only as the late 70s apogee of Space Rock, but also as precursors of the entire modern preoccupation with "New Age" spiritualism.

Indeed, *New Jerusalem*, from 1978, remains the yardstick by which

all such excursions should still be measured, the ideal melding of spirit and synthesizer, surmounted by Blake's not-at-all self-conscious visions of a new Jerusalem rising from the lost lands around Glastonbury, in Southern England.

The following year's *Crystal Machine* was named after Blake's accustomed instrumental role within the Gong saga. It was a more ambient (in modern parlance; at the time, it was simply atmospheric!) collection than its predecessor, and the absence of so coherent a theme as "New Jerusalem" certainly hurt the album, in comparison, if not execution.

It was Spacey, and parts were Rocky. But with lyrical fantasies giving up more and more ground to musical dreams, it is around this time that historian and fan alike really begin to squabble over the true definition of Space Rock. The sonic differences between *New Jerusalem* and *Crystal Machine* are tiny, as tiny as those which divide Hillage's *L* from *Motivation Radio*. But, a galaxy of dreams lay between them; dreams, ideas and ideals.

Regardless of musical format, funk or free-form, sidestep Space Rock even by a tiny amount, and suddenly you move into lengthy improvisations, devoid of coherent lyric, and whose ultimate destinations are expressed only in a title, or the cover art, or – echoing Hendrix – simply in conversation. Where does King Crimson end and Gong's "Ooby Scooby Doomsday or The D-Day DJ's Got the DDT Blues" begin?

Discussing his own private vision of the Space Rock genre, DJ Andy Dunkley insists that Van Der Graaf Generator, the frequently brilliant, but often erratic vehicle for Peter Hammill's most uncompromising compositions, met every conceivable criteria, pinpointing the dynamic "Pioneers Over C" (from 1971's *H To He Who Am The Only One*) as perhaps the ultimate excursion into the universe.

But VDGG, like Crimson, like Yes, like the latter-day Gong, worked on a very different plane of awareness, cerebral rather than spiritual, calculated rather than primal. There was an over-reliance on cacophony, a surfeit of wordiness, a sense that no matter how enjoyable the music was, the listener is still being slammed against edges which are quite unnecessarily sharp. As would become so apparent during the so-called Industrial boom of the early 1990s, it was hard to differentiate between music which was enjoyable for the sake of being music, and that which was conceived merely to be "interesting". To the unaccustomed ear, the kindest thing that could be said about VDGG was that they were always interesting.

Into this same out-field can be thrown countless others who have at different times been daubed with the Space Rock brush – from Barclay James Harvest to Gentle Giant, and on to Yes, Deep Purple and even ELP,

before reaching perhaps its most absurd conclusion in February, 1994, when *Vox* magazine dedicated the entire February, 1994, issue of its *Record Hunter* supplement to "Space Rock".

The usual suspects, the Hawkwind-Floyd-Gong axis, were rounded up first, but thereafter, the article literally lurched into a parallel universe wherein – the power of suggestion again! – Boston (on the strength of their album art), ELO (their lighting rig) and Queen (a movie score) suddenly found themselves rubbing shoulders with the masters.

And one is tempted to mutter, if science fiction lyrics are the only criteria... how come they missed out Rush? Dammit, Janet, Prog Rock is Prog Rock no matter how many little green men it takes to screw in a lightbulb.

But there is always the exception which proves every rule, and in this pack it was Quiet Sun, wherein future Gong drummer Charles Hayward earned his spurs.

Operating on the very fringes of the late 60s scene, described by journalist Pete Frame as "too musical" for the then prevalent scene, Quiet Sun was the brainchild of guitarist Philip Manzanera and bassist Bill McCormick, both students at Dulwich College in South London.

"We spent much more time rehearsing than playing," Manzanera later conceded. "We used to work up these amazing things and just practice them. It was very difficult to get gigs!" They were, in other words, too clever.

Caught at the crossroads between jazz-tinged improvisation and, with Dave Jarrett's keyboards well to the fore, the more introspective tones of Soft Machine, Quiet Sun's demos did attract some interest – from Harvest, EMI's newly formed Prog Rock label, and Warner Brothers, who went so far as to finance some demos from the band.

But nothing happened, and Quiet Sun disbanded in February, 1972, unheard and unrecorded. McCormick joined Robert Wyatt's band, Hayward turned up in All Wet & Dripping, before making his way into Gong, and it was to be three years more before Manzanera, now a crucial part of Roxy Music, had the wherewithal to reawaken his dream, reforming Quiet Sun for one album, *Mainstream*.

It was a revelation. Maybe time, and a general broadening of musical horizons, had lessened the extremes to which Quiet Sun had allegedly been prone to reach; maybe the band itself had calmed with age; or maybe Quiet Sun really had been five or six years ahead of their time.

But *Mainstream* slipped seamlessly into the mid-1970s, a brittle excursion which, while it certainly picked up where Van Der Graaf Generator and King Crimson left off, carried its threads in a totally different direction, to a point where titles like "Rongwrong" and "Sol

Caliente" could easily have slipped from a Hawkwind sideline, and "Mummy Was An Asteroid, Daddy Was A Small Non-stick Kitchen Utensil" overcame even the painful pretensions of its title, to dish up a tour of the entire cosmos in little more than six minutes.

Or, as one captivated reviewer put it, "'Interstellar Overdrive' in hyperspace!"

chapter five

Meanwhile, in a Muddy Field Near ****

Glastonbury is the mystic city, the fabled home of King Arthur, the psychic heart of England. The very physical landscape lends itself to legend and lore – the ancients knew the area around Glastonbury as the Summer Lands, for they were only habitable throughout those months. At other times, the seas which had once lapped as far inland as Pilton, twenty miles from the modern coast, would return to reclaim their own. Then Glastonbury would be cut off, an island in a sea of glass. The ancient Britons knew it as such – its Celtic name was Ynys-witrin, or the Glass Island.

In ancient times, too, a monument to the Sun stood upon the summit of Glastonbury Tor, the great hill in whose shadow Glastonbury itself stands. From the tor, the Somerset countryside stretches out for miles in every direction, but there is an unearthly pattern to the hills, fields and trackways which can be seen. A vast zodiac can be drawn within their boundaries, an astronomical instrument as old – and as accurate – as Stonehenge.

Glastonbury was a center of great wisdom and teaching – Joseph of Arimathea visited there early in the First Century (some say with his teenaged nephew Jesus at his side), and when he rested his staff in the ground of Wearyall Hill, it rooted and blossomed on the spot. A Holy Thorn bush, which flowers in mid-winter, still flourishes in the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey. It was grown from a cutting from Joseph's original staff.

The Abbey itself was built around 688 AD, from stones taken from the Sun circle. Arthur and his queen, Guinevere, are said to have been buried within its grounds, and in 1184, their graves – with Guinevere's body in a state of perfect preservation – were discovered by monks rebuilding the abbey following a disastrous fire.

Avalon, the gateway to the place the modern world knows as fairy-land, but which the Celts believed was the land where the Dead meet, was here, too, accessible to anyone who believed in its power. But as Christianity spread, so Avalon receded from view, into memory first, and then into legend – legends which drew their very potency from the energies which course through the Glastonbury soil.

The area is riddled with ley-lines, ribbons of pure natural force which

linked both early man's and Nature's landmarks – circles and tumuli, hilltops and groves. They are not unique to Glastonbury, nor even to England. In France, in Germany, throughout Celtic Europe, similar series' of lines exist. But in Glastonbury, they seem more potent, they feel more real.

So, if you were going to hold a pop festival to celebrate the forces of Nature herself, man's harmony with Earth, and Earth's with the rest of the universe, where would you take it?

Glastonbury Fayre, which was staged over five days, June 20th-24th, 1971, at Worthy Farm in the Vale of Avalon, was the apogee of British festivals, the Woodstock, if you like, of the underground. It was a gathering of the tribes for one last great celebration before the music scene splintered for the final time, and the creeds which once had been held so holy, of togetherness, of course, but also of tenderness, were shattered by greed.

Never again would so many groups and artists, from so many walks of musical life, be able to come together as one. After 1971, the very music scene would be atomized, and its particles placed in tidy little boxes: Glam Rock and Hard Rock and Metal and Disco, Punk Rock and Synth Pop and Aggro and Techno, Alternative, mainstream, hippies and skins, these are a few of my favorite things.... And though the Glastonbury *Festival* has now re-entered the UK rock vocabulary, revived every year for the next crop of pop kids, the Glastonbury *Fayre* was unique.

Festivals have been a part of the British music scene for as long as there has been a music scene to embrace them.

It is, in many ways, a curious phenomenon; outside of the Scandinavian countries, where darkness reigns for solid months of the year, there are few countries which might seem less conducive than Britain to the idea of gathering in the open air, with several thousand watts of electricity trailing loosely over a rain-sodden makeshift stage.

The country's climate, that historical scourge of garden parties, the cloud-borne demon which can turn the most innocent field into a sea of treacherous mud within minutes, dominates British life no less than it dominates British conversation. Yet still the people persist in going outdoors to enjoy themselves. Much is made of the Briton's indomitable spirit. His defiance of the elements is surely the root of all legend.

The traditional grandaddy of British festivals remains the annual National Jazz, Pop, Ballads and Blues bash, born in 1961 and, recent infighting (and name-changes) notwithstanding, still going strong. Staged at various sites throughout south-eastern England, since 1971 the festival has been known by the name of its current host, Reading; similarly, its now traditional berth over the long August Bank Holiday weekend is a comparatively recent development – throughout the 1960s, the Festival

occurred during the second weekend of the month, leaving the Bank Holiday clear for even more ambitious programs.

The first Isle of Wight festival was a one night affair staged at Godshill, on August 31st, 1968. Organized by beat boom pioneer Ricki Farr's Fiery Creations, the inaugural festival is best remembered today for the UK debut of the Jefferson Airplane, and for the rapidity with which – of course! – a grassy meadow turned into a miniature ocean, swiftly dubbed Hell Field by its unfortunate occupants. The storm was so intense that Arthur Brown even left his fiery helmet backstage – between the wind and the rain, it would have been impossible to keep it alight!

The Move headlined the festival with their customary panache – it took more than blustery old Boreas to blow out their spark; Tyrannosaurus Rex played a short set; so did the Nice – whose Keith Emerson had once been in a band with promotor Farr's brother Gary, the south coast-based T-Bones.

The Pretty Things, with drummer Twink a blur of dervish exuberance, reportedly regurgitating live frogs on stage, debuted the first ever rock opera, *S.F. Sorrow*, and towards the very foot of the bill, Brian May and Roger Taylor took their first steps towards Queen with their own first band together, Smile.

The following year's festival was an even more grandiose affair, with the promise of Bob Dylan's first show in three years ample reward for the 250,000 people who made the short crossing from the mainland. The Nice, the Pretty Things, Aynsley Dunbar and the aptly named Blonde on Blonde all returned from the previous year's bill, while the Who and Joe Cocker – fresh from the two week old Woodstock – co-headlined the second of the festival's three night run. Nestling close to the foot of this bill was the Edgar Broughton Band – they, too, would return, although not to the Isle of Wight, and not to so distracted an audience.

But it was the final Isle of Wight festival, in 1970, which has been deified, primarily, because it marked the final British appearance by Jimi Hendrix... and the unscheduled mass unveiling of the pickets at the gate.

There was plenty of excitement – Taste, with Rory Gallagher, Joni Mitchell having her set interrupted by peace protesters, the second show ever by the newly formed Emerson, Lake and Palmer, Mungo Jerry, Leonard Cohen and Jethro Tull, playing a set which even today, Ian Anderson reckons was amongst the best of his band's career. And that despite the whole affair, he says, being "a disaster."

"It really did mark the end of the hippy thing in the UK. It was an attempt to recreate Woodstock and it really did end in tears, a denial of all the supposedly good and worthwhile and wonderful ideals of the hippy thing. There were people breaking down fences, the promoter becoming so disillusioned that he walked offstage... it's wonderfully

funny looking at it. And most of the bands were diabolically awful!"

Of course, the show belonged to Hendrix – even after he turned in so ill-tempered a set that afterwards, he turned down the invitation to jam with the gatecrashing Hawkwind. He was simply too depressed – after a month off the road, drummer Mitch Mitchell admits that it was a mistake not to at least try rehearsing before they took the stage. "We were rusty, and it showed.

"The audience didn't help, and we had technical problems, with funny voices coming through the PA." And, of course, "it was cold and dank."

Cold and dank, wet and windy... to the hardy hippy convoys which spent every summer shifting inexorably from site to site, that was festival weather, no reason to be downcast or dark-hearted. Barefoot songstress Sandy Shaw was so enthused that she even recorded a song about it... "Wight is Wight" was hardly Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock", but it captured a mood regardless. And those people who complained about that mood, be it communal joy or weatherbeaten martyrdom... well, they just weren't festival people, were they?

In that they generally featured a less cosmopolitan line-up than the IOW shows, the National Jazz *etc* bashes *were* the haunt of the festival people – the original rain-or-shine jazzmen who continued to operate their own stage until as late as 1968, and the increasingly archetypal hippy bands who moved in wholesale in 1967.

The Floyd were meant to headline that year; they pulled out after Syd was reported as suffering from "nervous exhaustion" ("Floyd Flake Out!" was *Melody Maker's* headline), but still there was the Nice, exploding smoke bombs inside the tent where they were playing; and Arthur Brown going one better on the main stage outside. Tomorrow, led by guitarist Steve Howe, but powered by Twink, were there; and inevitably, so were the Move.

This community only shifted; never changed. The Nice were back in '68 (when the *New Musical Express* described Emerson as "the Jimi Hendrix of the organ"!), and '69, with a 43 piece orchestra and the London Scottish Pipers Band; Pink Floyd were back in '69, too, swamping the festival with much the same set as would appear on *Ummagumma*.

Arthur Brown returned in 1968 as well, headlining the Saturday evening show with a performance which was later to be held at least partially responsible for the festival's departure from Windsor.

His set was just moments into the opening "I Put A Spell On You" when a forty foot covered walkway, upon which some of the audience was standing, collapsed. Several people ended up in hospital, but initial announcements from the stage were treated as another of Arthur's funny jokes. He certainly appeared unconcerned by the alleged disaster.

His demeanor shattered moments later.

"I am the God of Hell fire!" he shrieked.

"No you're not," replied manager Kit Lambert, entering stage right. "You'll have to forget the act and just go on with the singing."

Brown unleashed a volley of disgust, then stormed off stage. He returned only after he was told that people leaving the festival grounds were obstructing the ambulance workers.

The following day, the Sunday papers were trampling over the morality of the festival; responsibility for the accident was never satisfactorily delegated, but most authorities managed to blame the audience, partly for being in Windsor in the first place, but mainly for having long hair. The *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper even whipped up a 2,000 name petition from Windsor residents, requesting that the festival be sent elsewhere in future.

It was, and the underground shifted uncomfortably. Events like Reading and the Isle of Wight were staged with the authorities' compliance, but their tolerance, too. Every year, it seemed, there were new regulations which needed to be complied with before the necessary licenses could be issued; every year, too, the various promoters stepped just a little closer to the established mainstream, raising their prices and diluting the fare. The last straw came in 1969, when the London cast of *Hair* turned up at the National. "My parents went to see *Hair!*"

Arguably, the Technicolour Dream remained the blueprint for a successful festival – of the underground, by the underground, for the underground.

It had not been an isolated venture, of course – throughout the last quarter of the Sixties, *IT* and *Oz* both lent their support to similar, if smaller, productions, and if the bands they attracted met similar standards – similar but smaller! – still there were enough top flight acts around who wanted to retain their underground credentials that few shows passed off without one mainline attraction or another.

Interestingly, however, those that did pass by relatively star-less were no less successful than their big league brethren. The Freakshow at the Roundhouse, staged in direct opposition to the last night of the 1968 National Jazz festival in Windsor, by Pink Floyd's erstwhile managers Blackhill Enterprises, offered performances by Family, the Action, Junior's Eyes, East of Eden and the Deviants, plus the folk quintet Eclection who had themselves been appearing at Windsor that same afternoon. The show sold out despite the counter-attractions on the other side of London, and it wasn't an isolated occasion. A hierarchy was growing, and it didn't need any superstars to sustain it.

When the Marquis of Bath turned over the grounds of his stately home to Led Zeppelin, it was the Pink Fairies who stole the show, playing

on a flatbed truck beyond the perimeter gates, with Nik Turner along to represent the Hawkwind contingent. And if they hadn't made it, there was a universe of bands who would have.

Hawkwind labelmates, and co-stars of the Greasy Truckers show, Man were the missing link between Space Rock and Prog Rock, a behemoth of byzantine chord progressions and light-speed guitar solos whose saving grace came when the band took the stage, and were able to stretch the ideas they'd crammed onto five minutes of vinyl into twenty-five minute improvisations.

"Spunk Box" (from the *Truckers* album), and two cuts from the *Padget Rooms, Penarth* limited edition live album, "Many Are Called But Few Get Up" and "H. Samuel" (named for *IT* founder Nigel's father!) catch Man at their free-flowing peak – following one of the band's periodic personnel shifts, Phil Ryan and Michael Youatt continued mining this same vein with their own band, Neutrons.

Like Man, the Edgar Broughton Band made only sporadic attempts at escaping earth's atmosphere. But whereas Man guitarist Deke Leonard admitted that his band's improvisations owed more to a trip to Germany, where their accustomed one hour sets were extended to four ("and we were too lazy to learn any more songs") than they did to any fascination with exploring the stars, the Broughtons so absolutely embraced the hippy ideal that to pass them by here would not only be a disservice to *them*, it would make a mockery of all that they *did* represent.

The band started life in the midlands city of Warwick, the brainchild of brothers Rob and Steve Broughton. Notoriously closer, in intent at least, to Jefferson Airplane (over time, their most popular numbers came to included the anti-Vietnam "American Boy Soldier", and an ode to Angela Davis), the Broughton's tendency to completely lose themselves in a solitary riff swiftly established them amongst the festival elite.

"Apache Drop Out", a psychotic medley of pre-Beatles guitar group The Shadows' greatest hit, and one of Captain Beefheart's weirdest, and the defiant "Up Yours" both characterized the Broughton's societal stance, but their crowning glory – not to mention a crowd pleasing anthem which could, and frequently did, last for up to twenty-five throat-gouging minutes, was "Out, Demons Out", an exorcism of the mind, and all the worlds both within it and without.

Both live and, as a surprisingly successful studio recreation, "Demons" opened gently, a building drum beat over which vocalist Rob would simply rap with the audience, exhorting them to "do this thing with us... don't put us down till you've done it... and if you do it, I guarantee, you'll be higher than you ever were before."

Then the crowd would pick up the chant, "higher... higher... higher...", and Broughton would still be rapping, about the joys of hard work, the

importance of love, and life and family, the need to go back, "several thousand light years", to the time when all of mankind agreed with those truths. "And here we are on this giant UFO, travelling through the space, and we all go together to celebrate...." And a new chant would begin – "work... work... work", or "love... love... love", and the crowd would join hands, and raise their arms up high – it all sounds so corny today, hippy-dippy-trippy crap, but have we really grown so cynical?

Relax! It sounded corny then as well, which was the whole point of the exorcism. Now Broughton was praying, invoking deities from every pantheon on earth, "in the name of the spirit, we beseech thee – raise us! Raise us! Higher! Higher!" Then the guitar would kick in and with it the final mantra, two hundred, two thousand, however many voices joined together in prayer – "Out, Demons OUT!"

And you know what the weirdest thing was? The weirdest thing was, it worked.

No other band ever connected on the same spiritual plane as the Broughtons, but several came very close, and they all had their own private anthem... private, because the audience they played to was private, in spirit if not in truth.

Maybe it took a certain stamina to sit in blankets in the midsummer mud, maybe a certain madness, maybe just a certain drug. But for those who were there, for as long as they were there, they weren't part of a crowd, they were part of a family, part of a gang. And the ringleaders, once again, were the Pink Fairies.

Lurching from the wreckage of the Farren-Took Fairies' memorable first gig, Twink quickly made plans to link up with the remains of the Deviants, when – or if! – they ever returned home. *Think Pink*, his now imminent solo album, was to be the catalyst. According to Twink, "it was an unusual set-up, because I was just a drummer in a rock band. But Mick [Farren] knew I was writing songs, that I could sing, and one day he said 'come and meet Seymour Stein'... we signed some contracts, he gave me some money, and the next day we [Twink, Steve Took and the Deviants] were in the studio! It really was like that!"

"The album was due out in July, 1970, so I contacted Jamie Mandelkau, to find out what was happening with Russell, Paul and Sandy [Sanderson], who were still stuck in America. The thing with Mick and Steve had fallen through, so my idea now was to form a new Pink Fairies with what remained of the Deviants – if we could get them home!"

With the Deviants' US label, Sire, refusing to advance the marooned men any cash, Twink and Mandelkau began calling around the various booking agents they knew in London, arranging gigs for a band which still didn't exist, until they had finally raised sufficient cash to fly the band home. "They went for three days," marveled journalist Pete Frame.

"They were gone for eighteen weeks." Two weeks later, on April 5th, 1970, the Electric Pink Fairies were finally unveiled at the Roundhouse.

The Pink Fairies were everything that the Deviants had promised, minus Farren's aggressive politics, but upping the hard cosmic consciousness in exchange. Their Radio One session debut, in November, 1970, best staked out their territory – it opened with Little Richard's "Lucille"; closed with Jefferson Airplane's "3/5 of a Mile in 10 Seconds"; and inbetween-times fell the Fairies' own "The Snake" – the band's first single.

Twink agrees that "The Snake" was a weird choice for release; already, it was the b-side, "Do It", which was established as their anthem, would remain so even after the Fairies (in varying forms) had recorded three albums... a screaming anthem which insisted that *anything* is possible, you just have to *do it!*

"Do It" opened *Never Never Land*, the Fairies' first album; it was also one of two live cuts which they contributed to the *Glastonbury Revelations* album – the three disc monolith which celebrated the 1971 Fayre. The other performance was "Uncle Harry's Last Freak Out", twenty minutes of self-fulfilling brain damage.

Glastonbury Fayre bucked every perception of festivals. The running order, though hinted at by word of mouth, was scarcely known even as the event kicked off. The festival was free, the venue was obscure... "it was doubtful if many pop groups would even bother," wrote one attendant. But Worthy Farm was besieged regardless, by people who "went with faith, a new kind of stoned certainty.

"The pick-up from [the] energy flow of thousands of people from all directions coming together, gradually shifted the experience onto a new level of being." Anything else that went on that week, the free kitchens which dispensed freshly baked bread and soups, the free drugs which were openly handed around, the free love and the free music, it "was all a bonus."

"The festival was very idealistic," remembers Nik Turner, "and run by a lot of very unbusiness-like people; because it was free, they had all these different scams for making money, one of which was some prints from John Lennon, signed, which they were going to raffle... but they forgot. And they had lots of other things like that, but everyone took too many drugs I think, and lunched the whole thing out. It was a wonderful success, but a lot of people lost money on it."

Amongst those people can be included future Stiff Records mastermind Jake Riviera, who handled the recording, Nicolas Roeg and Peter Neal, two of the directors involved in making a movie (1973's *Glastonbury Fayre*) of the event, and Barry Everett, an ex-member of Duncan Sanderson's schooldays band, the Firm.

The Pink Fairies were very much involved with the organization of the Fayre, contributing money to maintain the phone lines, distributing leaflets at gigs, and doing a lot of general promotion. "But what do I remember of the festival itself?", laughs Twink. "I remember that I was very stoned.

"But it was great to see the final thing come together; there were about 10,000 people there in the end."

According to Andy Dunkley, who joined Jeff Dexter as the festival DJ, the Fairies arrived at the site in the middle of the night, accompanied by a marching band which they proceeded to conduct through the ranks of sleeping people. "You'd have expected everyone to be mad about getting woken," Dunkley recalls. "Instead, they got up and joined the band, so at two in the morning, there was this great crazed stoned crocodile banging and crashing around the field!"

Another night, a naked American leaped onto the darkened stage and began wailing with his harmonica. The audience, startled from their dreams, chanted, stomped and wailed along with him. "It was a total spaced out hippy-dippy let's-take-lots-of-acid show!" remembers Dunkley.

The centerpiece of the festival was a vast replica of the Great Pyramid, embracing the entire stage. It was lit from both within and without, but it was at night, after the show was over and the festival goers milled quietly around their campfires, that the pyramid came into its own, an enormous silhouette which was both eerily out of place, but – even more eerily – somehow familiar. It was as if time had stood still, but space kept on moving, ancient Egypt in the west of England, with the fires as tiny pinpricks of light bent in homage on the soil.

Monday opened the festival gently – Dave Cousins, Brinsley Schwarz, Quintessence and Quiver leading up to a midnight showing of Hendrix's *Rainbow Bridge* movie. Jimi had been in the ground for just nine months – to so many people at Glastonbury, he remained a sadly missed friend.

The stars of that first day, however, were Skin Alley, gentle still but imbibed with a mystery which more than compensated for their absence of volume. From the stage, Glastonbury Tor hung in the gathering gloaming, a Christian tower pointing rudely heavenwards from where the Sun Circle had once stood. Nick Graham glanced in its direction, and counted in the song Skin Alley would later contribute to *Glastonbury Revelation*, the haunting "Sun Music". "Oh Sun, I want you; oh Sun, I love you...."

Pink Floyd were rumored to be headlining the second night – they didn't show; maybe a free concert in a field simply didn't seem worth interrupting a lucrative European tour for. But Traffic turned up, and so did Gong, re-enacting great swathes of the still-developing Pothead saga. Later in the evening, the audience decided to strip down the PA, then

rebuild it again. They finished just as the dawn broke over the field and a one hit wonder named David Bowie turned up with his acoustic guitar.

Angie, Bowie's first wife, still remembers the chill which whispered down her spine, and everybody else's, it seemed, as Bowie launched into the final stanza of his "Memory of a [different] Free Festival". "The sun machine is coming down," he sang as the first rays of light broke over the horizon. "And we're gonna have a party!"

Nothing which Bowie was to accomplish in the future, neither Ziggy nor Aladdin Sane, not the Diamond Dogtrainer nor the Thin White Waiter, ever eclipsed the sheer theater of that single moment.

"Then after Bowie," remembers Dunkley, "there was this band came on which I've never seen before, never heard of since, who came onstage with scads of brand new equipment; they were called Accrington Stanley (after a defunct English soccer team), they were reputed to be signed to the Rolling Stones' record label, and that's all I know about them. And they were fucking amazing!"

Day three, Wednesday, brought the inevitable festival giants – Hawkwind, the Pink Fairies and late into the evening, Arthur Brown, no longer ruling a Crazy World; shrieking instead from a stage ringed with blazing crosses, and offering glimpses into his forthcoming *Galactic Zoo Dossier* – "Space Plucks" and the seething, malevolent "Creation".

Brown, naturally, is one of the stars (some might say *the* star) of the *Fayre* movie. It had taken two years, and several changes of director, for it to finally appear (under Neal's name), and early impressions are of a low-budget *Woodstock* – the camera spends a great deal of time lingering on the audience (particularly the naked parts of it), often with frustrating results – Gong's performance of "Tried So Hard" is mere soundtrack to the crowd scenes; while the bands which are seen – Terry Reid, Quintessence, Traffic, Family, Melanie, Fairport Convention... – convey a very different impression of the event than the *Revelations* album.

Not a glimpse of Hawkwind or the Fairies, no Skin Alley or Mighty Baby, nothing at all to even suggest that once beyond the miasmic stew of mainstream attractions (and Traffic, Family, Melanie *et al* were nothing if not mainstream by Glastonbury standards!), Glastonbury was first and foremost a *counter*-culture affair. Nothing, that is, until the cameras captured Arthur Brown.

The last three years had been frustrating for Brown, confusing for his audience. A second Crazy World concept album, tentatively titled *The Coming of the Magician*, had been partially recorded, but the departure of drummer Drachen Theaker (for Atomic Rooster), says Brown, sapped "our creative energies."

An attempt to keep going with Carl Palmer replacing Theaker proved as unsuccessful as it now sounds unlikely (although Palmer retains an

obvious affection for his Crazy World days, hence his rerecording of "Fire" on the 1993 *Return of the Manticore* ELP boxed set), and by 1969, Brown had pieced together a new unit, "a total reaction to the kind of band the Crazy World had been, very strange and pretty revolutionary."

Material from this period later leaked out over the course of two albums, *The Lost Ears* and *Strangelands*. At the time, not a record company on earth had any time for it. "It was improvised in the studio," says Brown, "and some people might say that it sounds it!"

By the time of *Dossier*, then, Brown's chart-topping days were behind him, and he'd "gone back and joined the new underground." His new band, Kingdom Come [the first British band ever to use a drum machine on stage, incidentally], shared a number of bills with Hawkwind (and later, Gong), and would, over the next three years, produce three remarkable, and remarkably varied, albums – *Dossier, Kingdom Come* and *Journey*.

Across all three, Brown whipped and worried his band into a frenzy of freaked madness, one moment gnawing at the loneliness of intergalactic travel, the next deeply intoning Christian hymns: experimenting not only in sound, but in the capabilities of sound; not only in the adaptability of music, but in that of its audience too. For many people picking up a Kingdom Come album, lured by nostalgia for the old Hellfire days, it was an unlistenable morass of pretension and primal therapy. If only they'd seen him at Glastonbury....

"Glastonbury was quite remarkable," remembers Brown. "It was the English version of Woodstock, I suppose, but it had a much more spiritual feel... the Maharishi [actually Guru Maharaj Ji, who advised everyone to give up sex!] was there, various spiritual leaders were there, so it *was* a little different."

Very different. Brown spent the afternoon of his performance working behind the counter of one of the refreshment booths. "I'd been talking to the stall-owner, when he said he had to run off for a minute, and would I look after the stall for him? I said yes – and he didn't come back for hours!"

Later in the evening, a chicken narrowly escaped being barbecued when it roosted atop one of the band's wooden crosses, leaping off in considerable alarm when the first fireworks roared off around it.

Amidst so much weirdness, so much excitement, it would take something very special to bring the festival to a suitable close. How appropriate, then, that it was the final song by the (scheduled) final band of the final night which best captured the soul of the Glastonbury Fayre.

"It might seem strange that we're gonna do this one," Rob Broughton called out from the heart of the pyramid, "because it might appear to be that there are no bad vibes here. I don't believe that – and if you believe

it, you're foolish.

"So we'd like to do this thing which we do from time to time, and it's called an exorcism."

It was "Out, Demons Out".

CHAPTER SIX

Crossing the Rhine... and the Rubycon

Sometime around 1911, a dense fog settled over the southern half of Britain. People who remember it reckon you couldn't see your hand in front of your face for days, that the fog swirled in through the narrowest crack in a window or door, and filled the warmest room with its icy, clammy breath.

If it was bad on land, however, it was even worse at sea. The handful of ships which did venture out either turned back within moments, or simply wandered lost till they struck land or disaster. And at the height of the crisis the London *Times* announced, "Fog fills Channel – Continent Cut Off." It wasn't Britain which was isolated... it was Europe, the somewhat larger landmass which lay off her eastern coast.

Britain's insularity has both saved and snarled her people, her natural impregnability an insurmountable barrier against anything those dastardly continentals tried to throw at her, from Napoleon's Frenchmen to Hitler's bombs.

By the early 1970s, however, that barrier was loosening. It was the onset of Common Markethood which did it – on January 1st, 1973, Britain would take her place in the European Economic Community. But

before she ratified all the treaties, there was the matter of cultural exchange to sort out... Europe knew what Britain could offer, because it had been blaring out of continental transistors since before the birth of Beatles. But what did Europe have to offer in return?

In 1970, Blue Horizon label boss Mike Vernon signed a Dutch Prog Rock band called Focus to his label. Virtuosos on any instruments they chose, Focus was the equivalent of having four Keith Emersons all playing simultaneously. Their shimmering soundscapes – few of which seemed playable in less than three movements – had their admirers, of course, and Focus eventually became the first Euro-rock band to score anything more than a novelty pop hit in British chart history.

Focus, however, sprang from a creative well which elsewhere in Europe, in neighboring Germany, in France (and even in Greece – Aphrodites' Child, featuring the melodic bulk of Demis Roussos), was paying musical dividends in every field. All that was needed was for Britain (and ever-slavishly in her wake, the US) to start paying attention.

The focus for many of these groups was 1967's Summer of Love, the explosion of free form fancy which had spawned so much new music. Of course the Beatles and the Stones, the whole British Invasion shtick, had impacted on the continent, but indigenous attempts to ape them were generally silly, and almost always uneventful.

"Psychedelic music", "space music", the sound of the abandoned freak-out, however, that was something the Europeans could match on their own terms; more than match, in fact, because while the British and American bands had the baggage of ten years of past rock experience to shrug off, Europe was like a clean slate. In rock'n'roll, all roads lead eventually to Chuck Berry. Beyond rock'n'roll, they could lead wherever you want them to.

The first strivings towards establishing true Pop Culture-al identities in western Europe came from beyond the music scene – hippy philosophers like Daevid Allen, working in sound the magic which William Burroughs had worked in words, of course; but beyond even their far-out fervor, would-be authors and film students carving their own country's neuroses into whichever media they would fit. Frenchman Jean Luc-Goddard's *One Plus One*, ostensibly a film about the Rolling Stones recording "Sympathy for the Devil", instead erupted with a succession of flashpoints, culminating – in thought if not deed – in the Paris student riots. In Czechoslovakia, the Plastic People were butchering the bootlegged bones of Zappa and the Velvets, and in Germany, Wim Wenders was spearheading an insurgence of ideas which, for the first time since before World War two, was intent on creating a national identity. The difference was, this time it was for artistic ends, not political.

The new wave of young German film makers notwithstanding, the

catalyst around which Germany's musical renaissance would build was a young man who had spent much of his early adulthood outside of Germany, in Austria with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, and in New York with LaMonte Young. These were the experiences, far removed from any notions of pop or even rock, which prompted Irmin Schmidt to form a group once he returned to his native Cologne in 1968, and linked up with another occasional exile, Holger Czukay.

Czukay had spent 1966 teaching in Switzerland. He, too, had a firm grounding in the avant-garde; had both studied and worked with Stockhausen. But his Swiss students had interests which far eclipsed his, and if it's over-dramatic to quote Lou Reed, he can at least be paraphrased. Holger's life was *changed* by rock'n'roll.

The band's original line-up was completed by drummer Jaki Liebezeit, guitarist Michael Karoli (a former pupil of Czukay's), and an American, flautist David Johnson, and early in 1968, the newly-christened Inner Space set up shop in Schloss Norvenich castle, converting one room into a two track studio, and taking what they saw as the unfulfilled potential of the Barrett-less Floyd, the Soft Machine and Frank Zappa to its ultimate, logical, conclusion.

Inner Space's earliest available recordings were rough – a single, "Kama Sutra", which was credited only to Schmidt; an album, *Canaxis 5*, which was Czukay and a friend, Rolf Dammers, feeding assorted ethnic disciplines through a box of bleeping, hissing, tricks. Their personnel,

too, was unstable. Johnson quit a month after "Kama Sutra" appeared in November, 1968; another American, Malcolm Mooney, hung around long enough to witness the band change its name to Can, and record their debut album. Then he quit.

That record, *Monster Movie* was released in a limited edition of 500 copies on the Munich-based Music Factory label in August, 1969. Even by the standards of the time, it was primitive – a collection of electronics through which Czukay's percussive bass yammered like morse code. But Can had already crossed a rubycon which their Anglo-American counterparts would not bridge for several months more. "Yoo Doo Right" (covered, many years later, by Thin White Rope) was not merely a twenty minute excursion which occupied one entire side of the album, although that in itself was a feat. It was merely an excerpt of a solid *twelve hour* improvisation!

Neither was it a fluke. Over the next few months, Can were to be found providing background music at a theater in Zurich, but their idea of background music owed little to traditional fare. Again, they would simply jam for hours, and when it was pointed out that their improvisations conjured up visions of far away planets, they acknowledged that that was precisely where they were aiming their music.

On other worlds, in other galaxies, other beings were pointing their radio telescopes to the stars. If the first sounds they heard from earth were Can's... maybe there was hope for this planet yet!

Can's line-up continued to waver. Mooney quit after suffering a nervous breakdown; he was replaced by Japanese vocalist Kenji Suzuki, and it was in this form that Can signed to Liberty Records, the newly-formed "progressive" subsidiary of United Artists – the one label which had both heard *Monster Movie* and loved it.

Liberty/UA was to become the label most readily identified not only with Can, but also with the entire genre which by 1971 was being labeled Space Rock. The two entities – label and music – were not to be mutually exclusive, of course; Pink Floyd remained with Harvest, and UA picked up Man. But just as the Floyd were slowly moving away from space, so Man could be said to have been moving into it. Swings and roundabouts, you won some, you lost some, but UA seemed to come up trumps every time.

Can's first Liberty release was *Soundtracks*, a collection of largely disconnected pieces intended primarily as a stop-gap before the band's official second album was released.

Nevertheless, it went far beyond such a narrow description, particularly after a coveted UK release marked the consummation of another new genre, the slightly disreputable sounding Kraut Rock. "Writers for

British music magazines were quite inventive when referring to our music!" laughs Popol Vuh's Florian Fricke.

Kraut Rock was never a particularly well-defined term – to qualify, one merely needed to have a few Germans in your line-up, and for every band which sounded like Can, there was another which rocked like Atlantis, and a third which could have been twinned up with Hawkwind.

Atlantis and their ilk can be dismissed right away – it was only rock'n'roll, and not many people liked it. But the Hawkwind link – that demanded attention right away, and rock's archaeologists were already digging in the dirt. They emerged triumphant with an album released a full year before *Soundtracks*, the debut from a band which had splintered in two just months into its infancy, Amon Düül II's monumental *Phallus Dei*.

AMON DÜÜL

The original Amon Düül was essentially a German hippy collective which sundered after appearing, as an anarchic ensemble of bashing, crashing, revelers, at Essen's 1968 Song Days Festival. Also on the bill were the Mothers of Invention and the Fugs, but far from unifying the disparate streams of musical and political consciousness which ran through the commune, the impact of the visitors was to shatter them.

Amon Düül, the political wing, went on to release four albums – the first three (*Psychedelic Underground, Collapsing – Singvogel Ruckwarts*

and *Paradieswarts Düül*) all dating from one twenty-hour recording session, a monstrous free form bash which is marred not only by poor sound and musicianship, but also by the fact that the musicians didn't actually seem to have a clue what they were doing, and the fourth, *Disaster – Luud Noma*, culled from out-takes and demos from the first three. Out-takes and demos? From a freak out?

If Amon Düül were crashing, crushing noise-makers, Amon Düül II approached their muse from a far more sober angle – although they retained their erstwhile colleagues' fascination with banging things. *Phallus Dei* credits five band members with sundry percussive duties!

The effect, comparable in places to the rolling drums which powered Pink Floyd's "Set the Controls" (although *IT* compared it to a "mammoth, amplified Third Ear Band"), was both hypnotic and disorientating, particularly when it was spread, as was "Phallus Dei" itself, over one full side of the album.

Moving considerably faster than Can, still sequestered away in their room at the Schloss, laboring over what would become *Tago Mago*, Amon Düül II were back in 1970 with *Yeti*, a double album which captured the band at its short-lived peak.

Yeti is divided, emotionally as well as physically, into two very separate works. Disc one is space rock ("inimitable space rock", as *Record Collector* magazine put it, although chunks still sound remarkably earthbound – or *Earthbound*, as fans of the first King Crimson live album would put it), a deliberate evocation of alien landscapes and sound; disc two was simply spacey, opening with a title track which really was equal parts "Interstellar Overdrive", "Saucerful of Secrets" and the crushing intro to "2,000 Light Years From Home", before resolving itself into a solid slab of improvisation from whose depths it was almost painful to rouse oneself, even if it was simply to turn the record over.

By the time *Yeti* appeared, however, this most potent incarnation of Amon Düül II had shattered, shedding two drummers (Dieter Serfas and Shrat – who promptly formed the disappointing Sameti), and 50% of their bassists, when Englishman Dave Anderson left to join Hawkwind.

Other defections (including several more to the treacherous Sameti) left Amon Düül II on the verge of becoming Amon Düül III. But with the sole surviving bassist, John Weinzierl, assuming shared control of the group with guitarist Chris Karrer, Amon Düül II soldiered on, and they cemented their Space Rock reputation as well.

It was their album jackets which did it. *Dance of the Lemmings*, in 1971, was another double album, with a jacket which unfolded to reveal a spectacular panorama of space, as viewed from the flightdeck of a spaceship.

The music, again divided between conscious compositions and two

sides of improvisation, echoed that view, but somehow it seemed less innocent than before. *Yeti* appealed at least in part because the band was striking out for the unknown. *Lemmings*, although much of it was musically brilliant (and certainly extravagant), was more certain of itself, and therefore more calculating.

Yeti flew blind (as the sprawling, but sensational "Pale Gallery" proves); *Lemmings* had a map... and *Carnival in Babylon*, in 1972, simply switched on the auto-pilot, then went back to its quarters to nap. Essentially a hard rock album, belaboring themes which had already been exhausted by the likes of Deep Purple ("Shimmering Sand") and ELP, *Carnival* was, for many people, Amon Düül II's last fling – a brief resurgence via a 1973 BBC *In Concert* broadcast notwithstanding.

Can, meanwhile, had finally completed *Tago Mago* – again, a double album, again a statement which essentially encapsulated all that the group would achieve within the context of their earliest strivings.

Released in Germany in 1971, *Tago Mago* remains Can's most impressive album. Although Amon Düül II remained the Princes of Percussion on the Kraut Rock scene, Can also appreciated the emotions which rhythm induced – a logical notion to an audience raised on rock'n'roll, of course, but less so to one whose grounding was in the avant-garde.

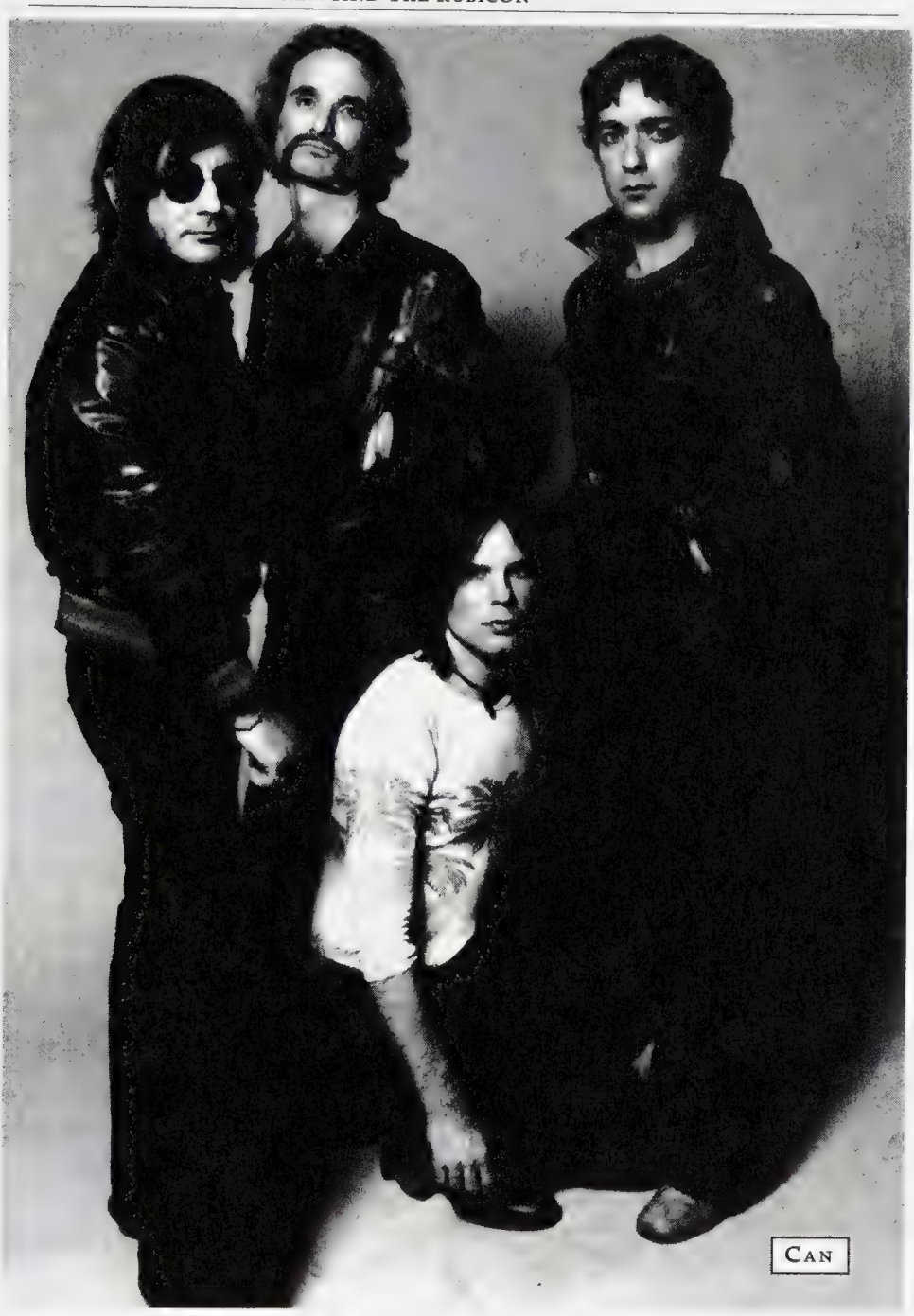
Named after a rock near Ibiza, itself associated with the great wizard Aleister Crowley, *Tago Mago* followed Amon Düül II's recent lead by combining one disc of relatively conventional song structures (the Jesus and Mary Chain even managed to cover one track, "Mushroom"), with another of free form improvisation – and one which was considerably "further out" than anything Amon Düül II had attempted.

Can toured Britain briefly prior to the delayed (April, 1972) release of *Tago Mago* there, and while it swiftly became apparent that imports had dulled the edge of Liberty's sales pitch, the band's Roundhouse performance was over-subscribed way in advance.

The label cashed in on this sudden interest almost immediately; by November, 1972, another new Can album was in the stores, *Ege Bamyasi Okraschoten* – a single disc which nevertheless recaptured many of its predecessor's high points, and arrived trailing a number one single as well – "Spoon", a German chart topper the previous year!

It was to be four years more before Can – in a very different incarnation – would have a British hit under their belt, but as *Ego Bamyasi* made the rounds of encouraging ears, even this distant success seemed somehow closer to hand. Richard Williams, the *Melody Maker* journalist who already had the discovery of Roxy Music to his credit, now began championing Can; the difference was, whereas his love of Roxy had been a voice in the wilderness, Can seemed to appeal to everyone.

It was unfortunate, then, that at this precise moment, Michael Karoli



was stricken with a perforated ulcer, forcing Can off the road (and, as it transpired, out of the studio) for several months. They returned in early 1973 with a well-received UK tour, but another six months were to elapse before their next album, *Future Days*.

UA were so anxious to make up for loss time that they rushed the album into the stores within a month of its completion. But despite a slew of fine reviews, including several claiming it to be the culmination of

Can's career so far, the momentum which had propelled the band so far was on the point of exhaustion. For while they were away, another power swept from the Fatherland, and for a moment, it, too, seemed poised on the brink of a breakthrough.

Popol Vuh was the brainchild of another classically-trained German musician, Florian Fricke. Signing to UA/Liberty in 1970 (within a year of the band's formation), Popol Vuh's first album, *Affenstunde* ("ape hour"), remains one of the era's most criminally neglected albums – despite the still-vibrant band's continued success, and Fricke's own belief that it, together with the following year's *In the Garden of Pharo*, remains most representative of the group's electronic period.

Fricke explains, "*Affenstunde* was signalling the beginning of a type of electronic music that contributed to the zeitgeist of the period. Unlike that which preceded it, this new type could more or less be played live before an audience. It was also generally classified as a sort of pop music."

This is an interesting point, and one which Fricke can only assume corresponded with the then-prevalent desire "for new listening experiences, new sensations. Although I'm not able to go into details on that, I think these facts didn't only apply to Popol Vuh, but were also significant for the other groups [operating at this time]."

And was Space Rock a part of that?

"Why not? We have an old expression [in Germany], 'to have one's feet in the sky'. Is that what it's all about?"

He continues, "we were acquainted with some of [those bands]. At that time, we had a vivid exchange of ideas with Amon Düül II, because they lied and worked in the Munich area, as we did."

Fricke also came in contact with another band working in this field, the one which would ultimately displace even Popol Vuh and Can at the vanguard of the Kraut/Space Rock field, and cast electronic music into its brightest spotlight yet.

Tangerine Dream were tailor-made for the Space Rock billing. Edgar Froese, still the Tangs' one constant member, was originally a lead guitarist, chopping out chords with a soul/R&B band (modelled on the Rolling Stones) called the Ones. The band even released a single, an ode to dope called "Greengrass", before a mutual friend introduced Froese to Salvador Dali, during the summer of 1966.

The friendship flourished – in 1967, Dali invited the Ones to create a soundtrack for his recently completed Christ Statue, and also bade the band entertain guests at his villa in Cadaques.

But Dali's influence was subtle; like Daevid Allen's "musicalization" of Burroughs, Froese saw what Dali was creating in one medium, and determined to have the same effect in another. When the Ones split in September, 1967, Froese took a crash course in rock psychedelics, liked

what he heard, and formed a new band. Its name was inspired (but not, as some sources reckon, lifted wholesale) from the Beatles' "Lucy in the Sky" – Lennon came up with Tangerine Trees; it was Froese who turned the woodland to Dream.

The four piece Tangs were truly children of their era – a conventional pop trio was augmented by a flute-playing violinist, Volker Hombach, while drummer Lanse Hapshash borrowed his surname from the London poster artists Hapshash and the Coloured Coat.

Their material, too, was second-hand, at least for the few first minutes. The Tangs' most regular gig was at Berlin's Zodiac Club, where the only thing to bear in mind was that songs were considered the height of bourgeois obscenity. Instead, visiting bands were expected to simply freak out – "to take us vhere ve haf not been before", and the Tangs swiftly learned to do that, blasting off from earth with the Floyd's "Interstellar Overdrive", and not looking back for the rest of the trip.

As the 1960s slipped through the hourglass, Tangerine Dream split and reformed with monotonous regularity, and by early 1969 they were essentially forgotten. Except by Froese.

Having been seduced by Pink Floyd once before, he was now obsessed with them once again, and in November, 1969, Froese reformed the Tangs one more time, to create his own response to *Saucerful of Secrets*. Still relying primarily on conventional instrumentation (guitar, keyboards, drums), but with Froese's two-track Revox introducing them to a new world of spliced possibilities, the band completed *Electronic Meditation* shortly before Christmas, and in the new year celebrated their first record release, on the little-known Ohr label, a subsidiary of Metronome.

It was not a commercial album, even by the standards of contemporary Kraut Rock. With at least half an eye on the *avant-garde* jazz scene, Froese was already experimenting with the removal of sundry rock essentials – drums in one passage, rhythm in another, and their replacement by other, less conventional sounds – the crack of a whip, the crackle of burning parchment.

When drummer Klaus Schulze quit (to join Ash Ra Tempel), Froese continued working for a time without any drums whatsoever. He recanted only after meeting Christophe Franke, a jazz percussionist who apparently welcomed the prospect of his own musical redundancy.

Shortly afterwards, organist Steve Schroyder replaced Konrad Schnitzler, and in this form, Tangerine Dream returned to the studio to cut *Alpha Centauri*, arguably *the* album which Pink Floyd had been threatening to make since "Saucerful of Secrets".

Like that track, *Alpha Centauri* took its direction from its title, with cover art (and a dedication – to "all people who feel obliged to space") to

match. It was not a record for listeners with a short attention span – the flute which wanders through the bleak soundscapes is often the loudest instrument on the record. Neither was it recommended for the clumsy of hand. On a record so quiet, the slightest scratch resounded like meteorites striking the astral surface. With that basic flaw in mind, it seems somehow surprising that *Alpha Centauri* sold over 20,000 copies in Germany alone – unheard-of figures for an unknown experimental band.

Peter Baumann replaced Schroyder shortly after *Alpha Centauri* was completed, and work now began on the double album *Zeit*.

Again, the watchword for listeners was patience, caution, stealth. Froese began dabbling in ever-more expansive special stereo effects, condemning the truly conscientious Tangs' listener to the isolated prison of headphones; he even spoke of creating a sound system which allowed the music to travel *around* the listener's head, as opposed to taking place on either side of it. It was as if Space Rock had already liberated the mind; Tangerine Dream intended liberating the body as well.

They could still rock when they wanted to, of course. "Ultima Thule", a non-album cut which was spread over two sides of a 1972 German single, was a savage anti-drug song, all boiling percussion and howling guitar. But it, like the "Oscillator Planet Concerto" which the band performed at the 1972 Ossiach Festival, was the Tangs' rock'n'roll swansong.

When next they appeared, with *Atem*, Froese's guitar was all but in mothballs, and the zither synth which Chris Franke played on *Alpha Centauri* had been replaced by entire banks of keyboards. And if the closing "Wahm" shattered the sea of tranquility upon which the Tangs' reputation was built, still you had to get through the Martian militaristic title cut to reach it.

As yet, Tangerine Dream had still to release an album beyond their native Germany; this changed in 1973 when Polydor, incited by the increasing regularity with which DJ John Peel aired the Tangs' import-only albums, unleashed *Atem* on a still Can-hungry UK.

Peel also invited the band to perform on his Radio One show, and in February, 1974, he broadcast four custom-taped tracks – "Mysterious Semblance at the Strand of Nightmares", "Movements of a Visionary", "Sequent C" and an excerpt from a work in progress, "Phaedra".

At the time, the group were working on a new album, *Green Desert*. The sudden flurry of British interest, however, did more than jolt their concentration – it distracted them entirely. After four years on Ohr, Tangerine Dream had forgotten what record company interest was (if they had ever even known!). Now they were being offered sums of money quite unlike any they had heard before, and visions of new equipment – equipment? No! Visions of an entire new studio! – danced in their heads.

Enter again, Virgin Records. *Tubular Bells* was still just nine months old, but Richard Branson's home-made label had spouted a confidence which more than belied its youth, pillaging the underground with visionary fervor. Oldfield and Gong had been joined by Henry Cow, Hatfield & the North and Chili Charles, while Faust – a hitherto unrecognized German band with three albums to their credit – had just been introduced to the market via an album release which – like Gong's *Camembert Electrique* – retailed for less than the price of a single!

Tangerine Dream's *Phaedra*, released in February, 1974, became only the tenth full-priced release on the Virgin catalog – and it proved that Virgin's advance had been well-spent in the instrument stores of Berlin. The group had completely rebuilt its arsenal, creating a sound tapestry which even Virgin, normally so good with words, could only half-adequately describe as "melting music". *Phaedra* melted, and on headphones, the listener melted with it.

In June, 1974, the band made its UK live debut, filling the Victoria Palace – more traditionally, home to pantos and variety – with the bleakness of an unimagined cosmos. And its blackness... aside from the lights which winked on their instruments, Tangerine Dream played in the absolute darkness.

The Tangs were not the first of the Kraut Rockers to guest on Peel – Can recorded a session in March, 1973 (and a second the following January, broadcast just nine days before the Tangs' own); Amon Düül II appeared in May. Their impact, however, was negligible, in terms of sales at least. For the Tangs, Peel was the turning point. *Phaedra* reached #15 in Britain, and over the next six years, *every* new Tangerine Dream album made the chart.

Virgin repackaged *Zeit*, and as a back-to-back double, *Alpha Centauri* and *Atem*. Froese got to try out his haunted headphones on a solo album, *Aqua*, and the band even outraged the Pope. That summer of 1974, they played Rheims Cathedral, supported by Nico – truly the only other performer who *could* remain in the same room as Tangerine Dream, and still play her music. The medieval edifice held 2,000 people – the Tangs crammed in three times that many. His Holiness promptly banned any future shows at the venue, and ordered that the entire cathedral be purified.

Throughout the remainder of 1974, and for much of 1975, Tangerine Dream remained on the road, essentially breaking only to record their next album, the eerie *Rubycon*. Its sleeve echoed *Aqua's* fascination with water (those are splashes on the cover), but the strain was beginning to show. Having already ordered Virgin not to repeat Ohr's insistent descriptions of their music as "spacey", Tangerine Dream now demanded the same of their instruments.

How ironic that having embraced the most sci-fi of musical instruments, Tangerine Dream should now back-pedal so fast – their descent into the abyss of New Age Easy Listening was some distance away yet, but still *Rubycon* marked the end of one era, and the dawning of another. (The live *Ricochet*, edited down from 40 hours of in-concert improvisation on the 1974 tour, of course is exempt from this process; so is Peter Baumann, who quit the group before *Rubycon* was even released. After a sporadic solo career carried him into the 1980s, Baumann eventually resurfaced at the helm of Private Music Records in 1988... and promptly signed Tangerine Dream!)

Tangerine Dream's rise to commercial glory was never considered a fluke; neither, though it took a bargain basement out-takes collection, *The Faust Tapes*, to accomplish it, was the reception which awaited Faust's own next album, *IV*.

In the past, the group's spectral electronics, harsher, angrier, and considerably more discordant than any which had previously left Germany, had appealed to many of the same people as were purchasing Slapp Happy's exercises in cut-up cacophony – Faust's self-titled debut has been alternately described as annoying, repulsive and noisy. Oh, and interesting, of course.

IV, however, boasted a brooding melancholy which steered well clear of chaos, which essentially captured the brief snatches of melody which had emerged on earlier records, and amplified them to their full potential. It remains a beautiful album, whose posthumous success, built though it was on such unpromising foundations, was both well-deserved and well-expected. Faust, after close to two decades of silence, reformed around 1993.

The re-emergence of the Tangs' old drummer, Klaus Schulze, four albums into a solo career which developed directly from his own acquisition of a small synthesizer, was less predictable.

1974's *Blackdance*, which echoed Edgar Froese's experiments with the artificial head process, and the following year's Grand Prix International winning *Timewind*, compound many of Tangerine Dream's then contemporary themes (indeed, Schulze depped for Peter Baumann on the Tang's 1973 tour of France); the attention granted Schulze, then, may seem disproportionate with his actual accomplishments.

If that is the case, he soon caught up with his own reputation, powering the Stomu Yamash'Ta/Steve Winwood led *Go* project through both a studio and a double live album in 1976.

Song titles notwithstanding ("Space Theme", "Space Requiem", "Space Song"), *Go* echoes the old Amon Düül II deception in that it deploys words and pictures to lead the listener to the necessary conclusions, rather than allowing the music to take them tripping. Still, the combina-

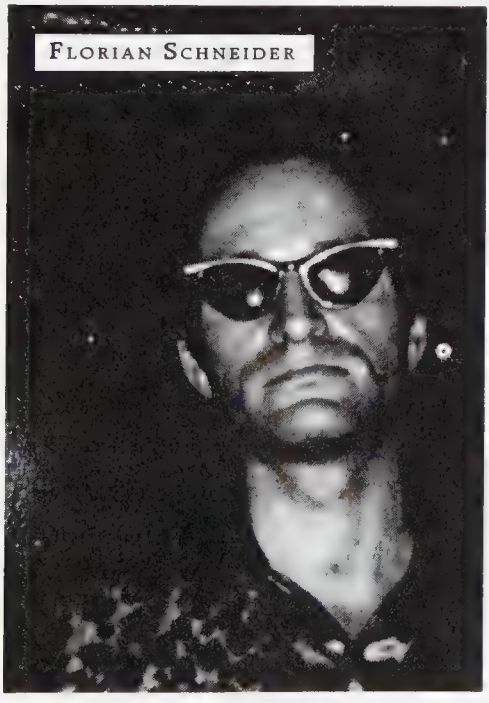
tion of Schulze's spacey synths and Yamash'Ta's broiling percussion is both savage and seductive, and in retrospect it even outclasses the German's next project, a seemingly fascinating union with the God of Hell Fire himself.

In May, 1977, Arthur Brown guested alongside Schulze for a handful of concerts in Paris and Belgium, then joined his touring band for a full European tour in 1979 (spawning one track from Schulze's *Live* album). The pair also disappeared into the studio together, recording Schulze's *Dune* (1979), Brown's *Faster than the Speed of Light* (1980), and a third disc released under Schulze's Richard Wahnfried pseudonym, *Time Actor* (1979). The links to either Space Rock or Kraut Rock are limited, but all the same... two Godfathers of the genre together in wax. Unbelievable!

Throughout the early-mid 1970s, Kraut Rock had essentially remained within the same, instantly identifiable framework – even Can's success with the insistent "I Want More", a UK hit single during the summer of 1976, was in many ways par for the musical course – while the band itself had left their astral projections far, far behind, in tandem with the producer Dave Gilmour, it was an irresistible slab of mu-Teutonic disco. And the whispered vocals were spacey, even if their message was sub-moronic.

No, if there were any jokers in the Kraut Rock pack, it was Kraftwerk.

Organisation, the feedback and fury four piece which first united Ralf Hutter and Florian Schneider, was already a going concern when Can first opened; indeed, Michael Karoli remembers Can's first ever show, at an art exhibition, was performed using Organisation's instruments.

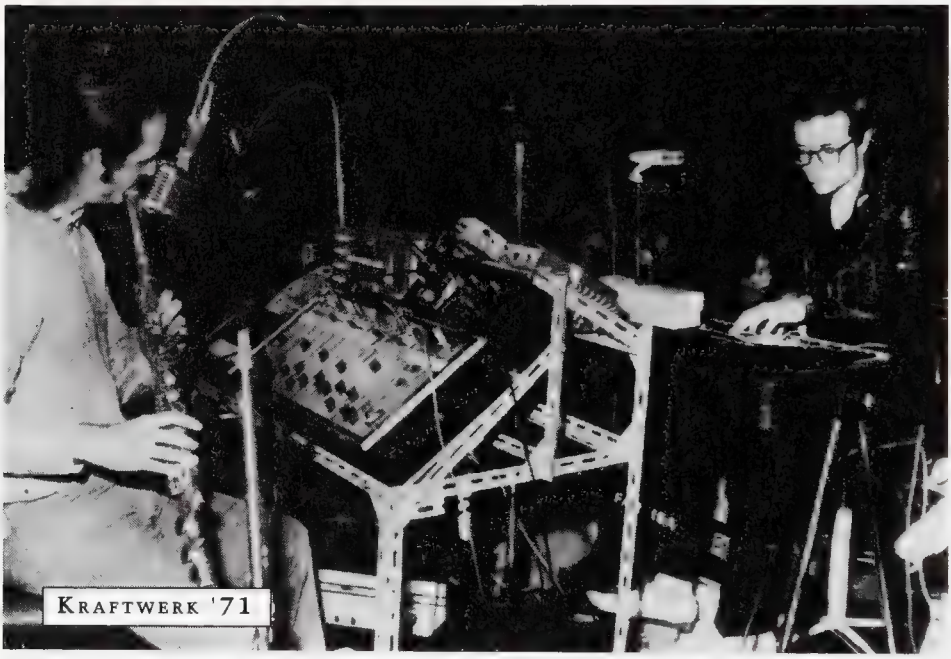


Organisation's sole album, *Tone Float*, appeared in early 1970, near-simultaneous with debuts by Tangerine Dream, Embryo and Xhol Caravan. It was even produced by Conny Plank, one of Germany's leading backroom boys, and it was Plank who also set in motion the series of introductions which won Organisation a UK recording deal with RCA – the first Kraut Rock band to be so lauded.

It was an unfortunate move, though. RCA's idea of marketing was to target Organisation towards the same Prog Rock audi-

ence as King Crimson – whose *In the Court of the Crimson King* sleeve was uncannily echoed by *Tone Float's*. It was a decision which lay distinctly at odds with the free-form pulsing electronics of *Tone Float* (Kraftwerk's biographer, Pascal Bussy, compared the record to Pink Floyd's *Ummagumma*: "the pieces... irritate rather than intrigue"), and any Crimson fans lured into earshot seemed swiftly to move out of it again. Not only that, but the record was available in Germany only as an expensive import!

Organisation did not survive the shock; by the end of the 1970, Hutter and Schneider had created a completely new group – the first member of which was their own recording studio. Like Can, the duo realized that the only way to approach the music they wanted to make was to do so in their own time, on their own territory. The remaining



KRAFTWERK '71

members of the new band, Andreas Hohman and Klaus Dinger, followed later.

The name which Hutter and Schneider chose for the band, too, was somehow ominous, and very German. Their home base, Dusseldorf, lies within Germany's industrial heartland, in the shadow of a myriad power plants. Power plant in German is Kraftwerk.

The only thing that didn't change was the duo's choice of producer – throughout July and August, 1970, Conny Plank was ensconced within Kraftwerk's own studio, guiding them through an album which, when seen in the context of the band's entire development, already signposted

the immense influence they were to have, not solely on electronic music, but on rock'n'roll in general.

Put simply, Kraftwerk are to the 1980s and 1990s all that Chuck Berry was to the decades before. And if *Trans-Europe Express* was their "Johnny B Goode", and *Autobahn* their "Rock and Roll Music", the least that can be said for *Kraftwerk* is that it was their "Maybelline".

"Ruckzuck", the opening cut, is played out by throbbing electronics and flute; the impression it gives, far from reaching for the stars (that would come later in the record, with "Megaherz" and the inter-galactic primitivism of "Vom Himmel Hoch") is of a train journey – refined, the same metallic chatterings would underpin 1977's "Trans-Europe Express", just as elements of the lengthy "Klingklang" (from *Kraftwerk 2*) would be echoed across "Spacelab".

It was, perhaps, inevitable that Kraftwerk's early days would be beset by personnel crises, but none was so devastating as when Hutter himself quit, early in 1971. Schneider didn't replace him; rather, he continued working with drummer Dinger and guitarist Michael Rother, and in this form, Kraftwerk made their television debut, performing eleven minutes of "Truckstop Gondolero", surrounded by their trademark traffic cones on *Beat Club*.

The performance owes little to Kraftwerk, past or present – rather, it veers very much in the direction of Neu!; hardly surprisingly, in the light of Dinger and Rother's own departure to form that very group, during the summer of 1971.

Neu's brief career in the vanguard of Kraut Rock rests on just two albums, *Neu!* and *Neu! 2*. Abandoning Kraftwerk's industrial textures for a more melodic approach, but retaining the sharp percussion which prompted some listeners to compare both Kraftwerk and Neu! to Can (oh, and they had two drummers!), the new band's albums received only a cursory release (through UA) in Britain; the first appeared, coincidentally, around the same time as the now reunited Hutter and Schneider's own second album, *Kraftwerk 2*.

The absence of a drummer for the sessions had prompted Hutter to purchase a cheap drum machine, and it is this instrument, rather than the pure electronic sounds, which dominates the record. Calmer, more understated than its predecessor, *Kraftwerk 2* was also the nearest Kraftwerk would come to the energies of their compatriots.

Other German bands, and this includes both the Space Rock contingent and those who managed to steer clear of the label, built their sound around atmospheres, moods and textures, evoking, rather than describing situations.

Kraftwerk, however, retained what might be described, and were

certainly construed, as song *structures*; after the experiences of *Tone Float*, Hutter and Schneider would never again abandon themselves to improvisation, and improvisation, of course, was what lay at the heart of so much of Space Rock.

Yet Kraftwerk remain an integral part of the genre, in spirit as much as in fact. Because if, say, Amon Düül II were the energy which blasts the rocket into space, and Tangerine Dream the landscape upon which that craft touches down, Kraftwerk were the tangled mass of wires and leads which made the journey possible. Other groups represented the emotions of space. Kraftwerk were the science.

Their third album, *Ralf and Florian*, was the defining moment. It was

RALF HUTTER & FLORIAN SCHNEIDER

recorded at a time when Kraftwerk's personal esteem was at an all-time high; in February, 1973, the duo played their first concert outside of Germany, at a two day festival in Paris.

The entire cast was German. Aside from Kraftwerk, Guru Guru, Ash Ra Tempel, the newly solo Klaus Schulze and Tangerine Dream were also scheduled to play. And though it seems bizarre to employ such standard rock terminology to describe so utterly un-rock-like an event, Kraftwerk blew them all off stage.

All their doubts fled – particularly after journalist Herve Picart, writing in *Best*, slipped from slamming the Tangs' "cold empty cosmos" to praising Kraftwerk's "obsessive poetry", before confirming, "Kraftwerk... is not a spatial group."

Yet "Tongebirge", twittering symphonics floating in free-fall, and "Ananas Symphonie", a Waikiki Beach Party in the 25th Century, both looked forward with technology, and even "Tanzmuzik", as oddball a stab at conventional dance music as could be imagined in those pre-"I Want More" days, seemed vaguely futuristic, vaguely alien. Maybe Kraftwerk weren't "spatial". But that simply means they didn't need to journey into the unknown. They already knew what they would find when they got there.

A year passed, a year during which Kraftwerk jumped onto the synthesizer bandwagon, then watched in disgust at what their fellow passengers were doing to it. The instrument, Hutter and Schneider were sure, had infinitely more potential than had been demonstrated so far; the freaky whooshes of Hawkwind, the morose contemplations of Tangerine Dream, the pompous pounding of Keith Emerson, these elements were all old hat, even before they'd been worn. Again, Kraftwerk were looking for new applications, new purposes, new *pop*.

History has not recorded whose idea it was to edit the original, twenty-two minute title track to the fourth Kraftwerk album down to a snappy three minutes; nor does it recall the look on the faces of the sales reps who were handed advance copies of it, and told to do their job.

But few records have ever seemed so unlikely, so unsuited, so *unsingle-like* as "Autobahn". And few have turned all those presumptions so thoroughly on their heads, and done the complete and utter opposite. Top 30 in America, Top 20 in the UK, "Autobahn" (and in its wake, not only its parent album, but also a rush-re-released *Ralf and Florian*) became the surprise hit of the year, of the decade.

Even the popular misinterpretation of the record's lyric (it really *did* sound as though Ralf Hutter and Florian Schneider were singing "fun fun fun on the autobahn," conjuring up visions of grinning Teutonic Beach Boys) could not camouflage its alien nature. In Britain, the record was popularly known as *Dr Who* music, out of deference to Ron Grainer's pioneering electronic soundtracks to the long-running science fiction television series.

There was simply nothing to relate it to. Nothing except – it really did sound like a roadtrip. Trucks race by, horns sound, there's the windshield wipers and *splash* through a puddle. If you really thought about it, it was almost frighteningly mundane. And as for the fact that it still sounded exciting... well, at no point on the record did Kraftwerk say which century they were driving through. Or which planet it was on.

chapter seven

Uncle Harry's Very Last Freak-Out

The Space Ritual tour hit New York three days in to its American debut, with a sold out show at the Academy, and the first rock'n'roll party ever staged at the Hayden Planetarium. Indeed, it was a tour full of firsts, including Hawkwind's status as the first British band to open their US account as *bona fide* headliners. The demand to see Britain's "futuristic electronic band" as the *Daily News* dubbed Hawkwind, was that great.

Plus, it was difficult to visualize the Space Ritual as anybody's opening act!

But the Space Ritual also came close to breaking the band. By June, 1973, Dave Brock was publicly lamenting that "as far as money in the bank is concerned, Hawkwind are broke", so vast were the expenses of maintaining the show.

Until "Silver Machine" actually made it available, money had never really entered into Hawkwind's calculations. Now it was the biggest consideration of them all; Hawkwind were no longer the people's band, they were a money-making machine, whose future could not be jeopardized by the individual members' misbehavior.

During the band's first couple of years together, manager Doug Smith reckons Hawkwind assisted the police with their enquiries no less than 68 times, with matters which ranged from simple possession of drugs, through to "conspiring to corrupt public morals". In 1970, "at a dance," (claimed the *Durham City Echo*), "members of the... 'electronic beat group' appeared naked; drugs, contraceptives and magazines were handed to the audience, and free love' was encouraged from the stage." The band chalked their court appearance up to experience, and didn't mend their ways whatsoever.

Five years later, though, Lemmy was sent home from a Canadian tour after he was arrested on suspicion of carrying cocaine (a felony count – he was actually armed with speed, a mere misdemeanor).

In the past, the group would have stood by their man. Now, they jettisoned him as fast as they could; just another name on a list of MIAs which, by early 1977, included every member of the Space Ritual crew bar one – Dave Brock.

During the eighteen months which separated the release of the *Space Ritual* album, and 1975's *Warrior on the Edge of Time*, Dikmik, Calvert, Stacia and Dettmar and House all quit the band – Calvert to pursue a sporadic solo career; Dettmar for a brace of scarce synthy albums under the name of the Melodic Energy Commission, and a twenty-year semi-retirement in Canada.

Stacia got married, Turner got shafted, everything was in disarray. But still, a lot of images linger from these so-confused years – the scaled down majesty of Hawkwind's stage presence which *still* left the band's contemporaries in the comparative dark; the turbulent power of *The Hall of the Mountain Grill* (named for the cafe where once, the band members met to eat cheaply); the more Space-than-Rock fantasy of the Moorcock powered *Warrior on the Edge of Time*, and the reciprocal arrangement which saw sundry members of Hawkwind guesting on Moorcock's *New World's Fair* album, later in 1975.

There was "Psychedelic Warlords (Disappear in Smoke)", a pounding new single which *NME* greeted with the warning, "they do more than just bloody disappear in smoke, they fall down in it and roll about on the floor, gurgling inanely and trying to find that stash of back issues of *Dr Strange* that the cat was sleeping on last night."

DEL DETTMAR

There was the Watchfield Festival, an electric dreamfest which captured the band in full improvisational flight, and *Roadhawks*, a seething collection of Dave Brock remixes which blended old ("Paranoia", "Silver Machine") and comparatively new ("Wind of Change", "The Golden Void") into one seamless whole.

But though they were eminently capable of still *sounding* the same, somehow Hawkwind didn't feel the same anymore. Nik Turner admits that "the money that 'Silver Machine' brought, and the fame, probably changed some people's attitudes to a degree, and egos inflated a little." A lot of images remain, but of them all, the most enduring was that which bedecked the sleeve of Hawkwind's final album for United Artists' UK wing, *Warrior on the Edge of Time*.

On a rocky dreamscape promontory, an armored, horseback figure stands poised on the brink of a mirror-image void. He seems hesitant, however, uncertain or even afraid to make the leap across the record's spine, and into the timeless unknown.

Hawkwind would once have jumped it in a second.

The Pink Fairies, too, had crashed and burned, a slow process of disintegration which arguably began the moment Twink quit "for personal reasons" in 1971, then wasn't allowed back in when he'd recovered. His erstwhile bandmates had grown accustomed to working as a three piece, in which form they recorded a fantastic BBC Radio One In Concert broadcast, and won a minor hit with the Fairies' second album.

Compared to its predecessor, however, *What a Bunch of Sweeties* ranks as a major disappointment, its only genuine highlights (a smattering of funny-the-first-time jokes about Uranus notwithstanding) the pair of covers which opened and closed side two – the Ventures' "Walk Don't Run", and the Beatles' "I Saw Her Standing There" (and which were also, sensibly, featured in the BBC radio session the band recorded in late March). Maybe we should have been forewarned by the cover – a collection of buttons, with Canned Heat and the Grateful Dead lying prominently face-up.

Paul Rudolph left the band shortly after *Sweeties*, to be replaced by former Junior's Eyes guitarist Mick Wayne. He cut one single, "Well Well Well", with the band, but was sacked following the arrival of Larry Wallis, in November, 1972. Wayne was last sighted working in children's television, an odd occupation for a former member of the most subversive rock'n'roll band Britain had ever produced!

Upon leaving Steve Took's Shagrat, in 1971, Wallis had joined the then little-known UFO – now widely feted as a Heavy Metal band, but once competing furiously for the same Cosmic Rock crown as the Fairies. Live shows were a haze of high-volume improvisation, crashing around a volatile combination of sci-fi dreaming and R&B reality... "Galactic Love", all space beeps and rocket riffs, the Moorcockian "The Coming of Prince Kajuka" – over the course of their first two albums, *UFO* and *Flying*, UFO showed genuine promise.

Wallis replaced founder member Mick Bolton, but it turned out that he was simply plugging the gap until Michael Schenker could lead UFO to their metallic promised land. Sacked, allegedly for drinking too much, Wallis resurfaced in the dying Blodwyn Pig, just as they metamorphosed into the crash-diving Lancaster's Bomber, then joined the Pink Fairies in time for their third album, 1973's *Kings of Oblivion* (and pigs might fly, as the sleeve art boldly sniggered).

Under Wallis' direction, the Pink Fairies recorded *Kings of Oblivion*, but the band was at the end of its tether. The Pink Fairies split in March, 1974, and though they came back the following year for a farewell show at the Roundhouse (July 13th, 1975), a full-length farewell tour, and even a farewell single ("Between the Lines", on Glastonbury *Revelations* supremo Jake Riviera's newly founded Stiff label), their heads, hearts and feet were never to leave *terra firma* again.

The *Live at the Roundhouse* album, recorded at that first farewell gig, remains a bean-feast of extended pub-rockery, and though the Pink Fairies have resurfaced periodically since then, from the moment (in 1977) that Larry Wallis locked his guitar onto "Police Car", it's been that song which has drawn the applause at his shows. "Uncle Harry's Last Freak Out" doesn't even come into it.

If the Pink Fairies were helplessly presiding over the death of one legend, Twink was midwife at least at the birth of another – although it is a claim he neither relishes nor, today, willingly discusses.

Following his departure from the Fairies, Twink retired to Cambridge, where he opened a club, the 10p Boogie, with Delivery bassist Jack Monck – the husband of one of Syd Barrett's ex-girlfriends).

Of course Twink and Barrett's paths crossed, and over tea and cakes one evening, Twink suggested they put a band together with Monck. "Syd never actually said: 'Yeah, this is a good idea,'" Monck later reflected. The suspicion was, Barrett simply did it because he felt he had to.

Stars' rehearsal repertoire comprised a couple of early Floyd numbers (absent, however, from the live show), highlights from Syd's solo sets, and a lot of twelve bar blues; the band itself debuted in an East Road, Cambridge, cafe; moved on to a free show in Market Square; guested at King's College, Cambridge, where they backed the visiting American bluesman Eddie "Guitar" Burns; and were finally unveiled at the Cambridge Corn Exchange, sharing the bill with the MC5.

"The chords are out of tune," wrote *Melody Maker's* Roy Hollingworth, "and [Syd] keeps looking to his right and sort of scowling.... he played a demented solo that ran ragged lines up to ten minutes... he messes chords together. There is no pattern, but if you think hard you can see a faint one."

Stars struggled on. Barrett's right index finger was bleeding. They played a mournful "Octopus" and a claustrophobic "Dark Globe". The last thing anyone remembers from the show was Barrett playing "Gigolo Aunt", then announcing "I don't know what that one was called."

The Madcap stopped laughing after that.

Twink and Jack Monck tried to keep Stars going without Syd, but it was a doomed venture. By the end of 1972, the drummer was leading ZZZ, the Cambridge based trio who (under the name of Twink) supported the Space Ritual at the Brixton Sundown.

According to guitarist Alan Lee Shaw, the band also opened for Pink Floyd, but while ZZZ did struggle sporadically on through the next five years, and even got a single released (the punky "I Wanna Be Free" single, under the 1977 pseudonym The Rings), it was another dead end.

By mid-summer, the Rings had sundered, and Twink was fronting a new Pink Fairies line-up, conducting them through a gloriously deranged

rearrangement of "Do It". A few brave souls had already hinted that there was more than a little common ground between the freaks of '71, and their safety-pinned offspring of half a decade later; for just a few minutes at the 1977 Mont de Marsen Punk Festival, the amphetamined "Do It" which roared through the spikey-topped audience seemed as vital as any self-made Pistols anthem.

Ah, but was it Space Rock? Recreated on Twink's 1990 *Mr Rainbow* album, alongside the b-side "Psychedelic Punkeroo", it was – and jolly fine Space Rock too. At the time, though... no, it probably wasn't. By the mid-1970s, Spaceship Earth had caught up with just about everybody. It was as if man's musical incursions into space really were intertwined with his physical intrusion into it, and when the Space Lab crumpled and crashed back to earth, it took more than a few million bucks worth of technology with it. A few million dreams went up in smoke with it. Short of the human carnage which the *Challenger* space shuttle disaster would release, no greater psychic catastrophe could have been wrought.

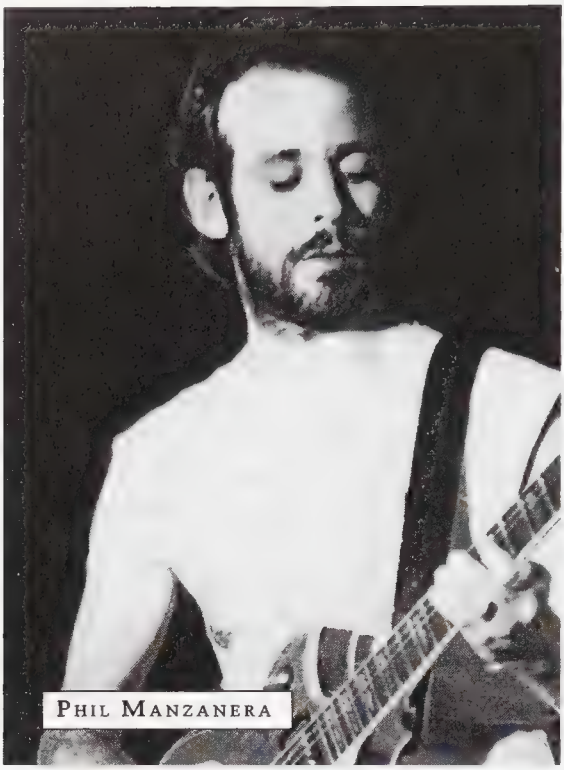
Often, the erosion of these dreams seems clear in hindsight alone – the increasingly brutal rock'n'roll roar of the Fairies supplanting the spectral drift of *Never Never Land*; the rudder-less Gong, becalmed in seas of frustrating fusion; Hawkwind singing of space, but dreaming of stardom, sci-fi pop for an age where reality was catching up with recent fantasy; and then Punk Rock exploding across the entire rock'n'roll spectrum, until even the monsters it came to destroy, the ELPs, Yes' and Pink Floyds of before, were turning out their hardest new albums in years.

Suddenly, it was hard enough to make a living in the cities we'd already got, let alone building new ones on planets unknown.

Within this state of increasingly landlocked affairs, the handful of probes which did get into orbit tended to come from entirely new launch pads... the pre-industrial questing of Throbbing Gristle and Adi Newton's quasi-spatial Clock DVA made at least tentative efforts to escape Punk's cloying gravity, but they did so in the hope of liberating sound, not the mind. But even as the whole shebang imploded, there was still some hope for the future, a beacon, if you will, to which the last like-minded souls would eventually gravitate.

The 1975 Quiet Sun rebirth, like guitarist Phil Manzanera's poppier *Diamond Head* album, took place during one of the increasingly protracted lay-offs which now dogged Roxy Music, Manzanera's regular band, and the electronic demon which sent the entire rock'n'roll time machine reeling backwards to the future, forwards to a glamorous past.

Formed four years earlier, in 1971, the Bryan Ferry-led Roxy burst with fresh hopes and fiery vision onto a rock scene which couldn't believe its luck – Bolan was there, and Bowie and Glitter, wave upon wave of


PHIL MANZANERA

shiny young dudes, with one eye on the stars, and stars in their eyes. (Davy O'List fired Ferry's first vision, incidentally, and the John Peel session which remains the only recorded evidence of his sojourn still blisters with the foresight he had always embodied.)

Ferry's futuristic Edwardian glamor aside, Roxy's focal (and, in terms of gossip, vocal) point was synth player Brian Eno. How the rumors flew about him! He was heir to a vast pharmaceutical fortune – Eno's was a well-known indigestion remedy; he was gay, he was glam, he was (of course!) an alien, an emissary from God Himself... Eno, of course, is an anagram of One.

Actually, he was plain old Brian Peter George St Baptiste de la Salle Eno, an East Anglian Catholic who never dreamed he was destined to bear the longest name in rock history. As a youth, he wanted to become a painter, but the art which he once slapped on canvas slowly gave way to the notions of sound as a painting in itself.

He studied electronics, and published a book, *Music for Non-Musicians*. He met saxophonist Andy Mackay in a tube station, and was enrolled into Roxy as their technical adviser. But he didn't do too much advising. While Roxy rehearsed, Eno would be behind the mixing desk, doing strange things to the sound from the back of the hall – the same notions as were being pioneered, independently, by Del Dettmar with Hawkwind.

And like Dettmar's, Eno's transition from soundboard to stage was as gradual as it was inevitable. His cold electronics projected the public face of Roxy Music, Ferry's fantasy of a world where all the men looked like Humphrey Bogart, and the women – all models, naturally – didn't have names, they had numbers. "The sweetest queen" Ferry had ever seen took her's from a 1962 British car number plate... CPL 593A

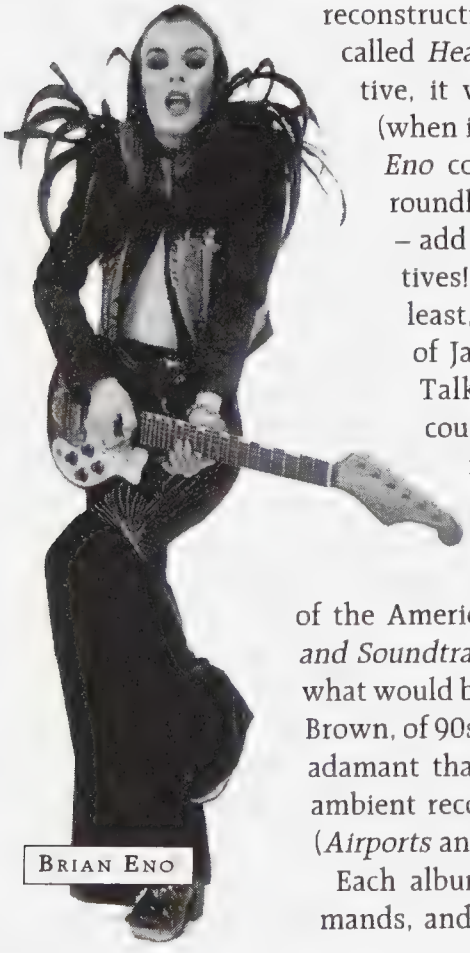
Eno quit Roxy during the summer of 1973, but the fights with Ferry upon which the split was blamed were only part of the problem. Eno was

growing bored with rock'n'roll in general, and though he immediately turned around and recorded two albums which still rank amongst the most important *pop* records ever, it was clear that his eyes were elsewhere.

But where? Successive Eno albums have proven as individual and, in their uniqueness, unphotographable as any other *avant-gardist*. It still seems improbable, if not impossible, that as early as 1972, he was recording what became *No Pussyfooting* with Crimson's Robert Fripp; impossible, because when next the duo convened, in 1975, *Evening Star* was a positive step backwards.

A series of indefinable burps, bleeps and blurts, *No Pussyfooting* was the sound of robots having sex. (Elements of *Pussyfooting*, incidentally, continued to appear in King Crimson's live show for another two years.) *Evening Star*, by comparison, was light years more accessible, five tracks (compared with *Pussyfooting's* two), with tunes and melodies and ideas which didn't simply swirl around until either Fripp or Eno pushed the pause button and cut to another tape.

In 1978, the duo regrouped once more, following up Eno's reconstruction of David Bowie with a project called *Healthy Colours*. Bare, bizarre, repetitive, it was not to be released until 1994 (when it appeared on the *Essential Fripp & Eno* compilation), at which time it was roundly condemned by friend and foe alike – add "boring" to the list of earlier adjectives! What is remarkable, in passing at least, is its resemblance to the later work of Japan, and Eno's own production of Talking Heads – by which time, of course, Eno's own solo work had moved further, much further, on.



BRIAN ENO

Music for Airports, *Music for Films*, *Possible Musics*, and a soundtrack for Al Reinert's movie of the American Apollo missions, *Atmospheres and Soundtracks*, not only defined, they *created* what would become Ambient Music; indeed, Rob Brown, of 90s' electronic band Autechre, remains adamant that "there have only been five truly ambient records ever made – and two of them (*Airports* and *Atmospheres*) are by Eno."

Each album does no more than its title demands, and though Eno himself would doubt-

less cringe at the use of the term, he has kept the spirit of Space Rock alive through his musings. Its progenitors simply let it burn up on re-entry to the atmosphere. Unlike Eno, they'd finally realized that man, it was *lonely* up there!

It wasn't only the Anglo urban spacemen who seemed to be reeling, either. Elsewhere, too, far beyond the reach of Punk's napalm fireball, fresh jetstreams of consciousness had entered airlocks which once seemed impervious to influence. For Tangerine Dream and Kraftwerk, earthly environs suddenly seemed sufficient sources of new inspiration – the themes of water which characterized *Aqua* and *Rubycon*; the down-to-ground journey on the Kraftwerkian *Autobahn*.

Again, success played a major part in both bands' return to earth. The Tangs were now locked in soundtrack-making overdrive, churning out a series of increasingly mellifluous mood pieces which would, eventually, develop into the toothless concern of the New Age; and though Kraftwerk were made of substantially tougher stuff, their future, too, was now firmly in their own grasp.

Funded by the profits from the hit, Kraftwerk's Florian Schneider and Ralf Hutter had completely refurbished their studio, outfitting it with the latest technology and launching themselves into the present with a vengeance – thus the clattering rattle of "Trans-Europe Express", thus the studied exotica of "The Model", thus – though its title and theme are misleading, the silent whirl of "Spacelab".

Within each, it was the music, not the mood, which faced the future; it was Science with no Fiction; and following Kraftwerk's ultimate absorption into modern pop's body politik, it was Rock with no Space to move in.

The creeping gentrification of rock during the post-punk era was the cultural key to this stagnation. Punk itself was built upon what might, in less forgiving hands, be dubbed the detritus of rock'n'roll; Brian James, erstwhile leader of first-wave punkers the Damned complains, "rock'n'roll had lost its commitment. The only band which still meant anything [when punk broke through] were the Pink Fairies."

Bearing in mind that by 1975-76, the Fairies had lurched into a musical Middle Earth of sorts, retaining their underground credentials whilst redirecting their own musical energies towards simple high-octane Pub Rock'n'Roll; remembering, too, that the most noteworthy new band to emerge from the Space Rock underground was the disgraced Lemmy's Motorhead, the correlation between Punk and the musical values of half a decade previous can be summed up only by accepting that the musical wheel had turned full circle, and that rock was back where it started from.

The difference was, the industry was older now. It knew how to deal

with these insurrections.

The first Motorhead menage – Lemmy, Lucas Fox and Larry Wallis, moonlighting from the recently reborn Pink Fairies – remains the ultimate realization of all that rock'n'roll should portend.

Produced by Dave Edmunds, fresh from completing his sense-shattering remix of Arthur Brown's *Journey*, Motorhead's first, 1975, recordings were electrifying, Lemmy's raw throat sucking the last link with life from his own past with Hawkwind, even as he fed it to the yowling fledgling of his future.

"Lost Johnny", the pharmaceutical nightmare which Lemmy wrote with Mick Farren for Hawkwind's *Mountain Grill* (and which Farren himself would rerecord at breakneck pace a year later), and the self-fulfilling "Motorhead" (the b-side of Hawkwind's "Kings of Speed" single) both reappeared, alongside Wallis' Pink Fairies anthem "City Kids" and the R&B stomper "Leaving Here",

Still unreleased, the end result has been described as Wallis as "very different" to anything Motorhead were to accomplish in the future. Edmund's characteristic widescreen wall of sound leavened vast empty spaces within the Motorhead roar, a true sonic symphony. But Edmunds quit the sessions after just four songs, and Motorhead started again with a considerably less visionary producer, former Four Pennies Merseybeater Fritz Fryer. Nine songs were completed, including another Lemmy-led Hawkwind classic, the eerie "The Watcher", but would anyone get to hear them? Lemmy had signed his new band to UA, but the label was in the throes of a major reshuffle. Andrew Lauder had left, and Amon Düül II, Can, Man and Hawkwind weren't far behind.

Motorhead followed. The new UA regime hated the proffered tapes (only releasing them years later, following Motorhead's success elsewhere, as *On Parole*), and Motorhead lurched ungraciously into the string of gigs which had originally been arranged to promote the record – but were now simply an opportunity to unleash the band members' fury. The image of industry outcasts around which Motorhead were to build their entire future was forged right then.

The band seemed doomed. Jake Riviera offered to put a single out on Stiff, but "White Line Fever" never appeared. Other labels came close, but leaped back when it got too hot. Uncompromising, threatening, dense, by the time Chiswick Records finally agreed to take a chance on them in 1978, Motorhead (now lining up as Lemmy, Phil Taylor and Eddie Clarke) had thrown their lot in entirely with the Hell's Angel imagery with which Lemmy had long since been flirting. "It keeps the idiots away," he explained.

Those early Motorhead shows were a confused blaze of glory. Striding confidently into the Punk ethos which would swiftly claim Motorhead

as one of its own, the band nevertheless encored occasionally with "Silver Machine", and what the song lost in the translation, it gained in the performance.

Maybe the nearest Motorhead ever came to its title was a motorbike, but Lemmy had been singing the song for four years at that point. It could be whatever he wanted it to be – and it was a vast improvement either way on the travesty Hawkwind later rendered the song. Nik Turner returned to the mothership in 1982, and promptly domesticated the band's greatest hit. But "Washing Machine" didn't simply trample on its own delirious heritage; it trampled on its audience's too. Motorhead may have been sloppy, but at least they still showed respect.

As the late 1970s progressed, maybe respect was what was missing all round. Although it was very fashionable amongst the first generation Punks to slag pop's past without mercy, the most versatile early spokesmen at least acknowledged their own childhood roots – Johnny Rotten sported a T-shirt reading I HATE PINK FLOYD, but when London's Capital Radio bade him talk listeners through his record collection, Peter Hammill and Can both earned an airing.

It was only later, with the advent of second and third generation Punk bands, that the past fell into total disrepute, and it became *de rigeur* for newcomers to maintain solidarity with the new genre's own past. But the band whose influences are pegged no further back than the Pistols is missing the point entirely. Rotten liked reggae and Hawkwind... and so did his mum!

Documenting his teenaged tastes in his autobiography, Rotten reported, "she would always come upstairs... and ask... 'what have you bought lately, son? I heard some noise earlier on that I rather liked.'

" No, Mum, I'm sure you won't like this. It's Hawkwind's first album.' She would sit and listen and absorb the music. She was genuinely thrilled"!

Anyway, that's what made Rotten so special. He had respect.

So did Brian James. A long-time Fairies fan, when The Damned came to make their second album, *Music For Pleasure*, James placed Syd Barrett at the top of their list of preferred producers. Unfortunately, James laughed later, "our label couldn't find him, so they figured they'd just get someone else from Pink Floyd, and hope we wouldn't notice." The Damned ended up with Nick Mason, *Music for Pleasure* proved neither musical nor pleasurable, and the band broke up shortly afterwards.

James continued to fly the flag, however, and in 1978 his latest band, Tanz der Youth, signed to Radar, the latest label-brainchild of Andrew Lauder, once the A&R heart behind United Artists; and Martin Davis, a director at the same company.

Radar was an ambitious company. Acknowledged stars – Elvis

Costello and Nick Lowe – rubbed releases with a clutch of classy American cult imports (Red Crayola, 13th Floor Elevators and Iggy Pop), and a host of Lauder's own new discoveries, the young Robyn Hitchcock-led Soft Boys, Metal Urbain and Tanz der Youth.

James aside, Tanz der Youth had a unique pedigree. Bassist Andy Colquhoin arrived from the frantic Warsaw Pact, a band which made the Guinness Book of Records by recording and releasing an album in less time than it takes most bands to tune a guitar.

Tony Moore was an understated keyboard player cut firmly in the style of the Floyd's Rick Wright, and drummer Alan Powell had just been kicked out of Hawkwind, only months after beating the drums through the band's lurch into the cosmic stew of 1976's *Astounding Sounds, Amazing Music* album.

Together, Tanz der Youth hatched "Trans-magical music, the sound of the 1980s". Unfortunately, they launched it in 1978, and the world just wasn't ready for it. One single, one Peel session, and an absurd on-the-road coupling with Black Sabbath aside, Tanz der Youth was so far ahead of its time, the band is best remembered only for the ammunition it gave rock's journalistic pun-makers... damned in nature, if not in name!

The band's great unveiling took place in May, under the auspices of Nik Turner and Barney Bubbles (now Radar's graphic designer), at an ambitious return to the free festival mentality, the Roundhouse Love In.

Since departing Hawkwind a year before, Turner had spent his time commuting between Egypt (where he performed in the Great Pyramid) and the recording studio, piecing together a new band, Sphynx, and an album, *Xitintoday*.

The roots of Sphynx, strangely, lay in Fast Breeder & the Radio Actors, a 1976 collaboration between Turner, drummer Steve Broughton, Gong's Gilli Smyth and Steve Hillage, and sundry others (the then unknown Sting included). This early anti-nukes project was essentially still-born, but as Turner began piecing together his next grand vision, Hillage at least was to remain on hand, alongside Miquette Giraudy, Tim Blake, Mike Howlett, Alan Powell and latter-day Mike Oldfield sidekick Morris Pert.

Built around Turner's own deep-rooted fascination with ancient Egypt, Sphynx was not the first time rock'n'roll had turned to the Pharoahs for inspiration. In 1972, a central heating salesman from Sheffield, England, launched himself as a reincarnation of the God Ramases (with his wife, conveniently enough, the reborn Sel).

Space Hymns, the duo's debut album, was gorgeously packaged in a painting of a church steeple blasting off into space (explained by the sleeve notation, "the rocket ship shape of churches probably dates back to

Moses' visit to speak to God on the mountains, and what he saw there"); the music itself traveled to the end of the world ("Dying Swan Year 2000"), but fulfilled its outer-wrapper's potential only occasionally, and lyrically, rather than musically.

Indeed, cruel though it is to remember such things, the album's later popularity amongst collectors (which in turn inspired a Ramases' "comeback" album, *Glass Top Coffin*, in 1975) owed more to the duo's backing musicians than to their own performance. Within six months of recording *Space Hymns*, Eric Stewart, Lol Creme, Kevin Godley and Graham Gouldman would be topping the UK chart as 10cc!

In concert as well as on vinyl, Sphynx likewise revolved around an all-star backing band – Davy O'List was involved for a short time, Steve Broughton... "whoever," says Turner, "happened to be available at the time, musicians and dancers." The difference was, nobody would ever recognize them. If you want to sound like Egyptians, you have to dress like them as well, and Sphynx stripped every bandage store in town as they prepared their mummy-masque costumes.

The day-long Roundhouse Love-in was to climax with the first performance of the full-strength Sphynx, two hours of spellbindingly eerie, ethereal sounds which only occasionally resolved themselves into the repetition of rock. Seemingly disembodied voices interpreted the events on the stage, tracing the passage of the soul after death – and if it seemed a total contradiction of the Punk ethos which was in full flight beyond the Roundhouse walls, that in itself sufficient to establish Sphynx's credentials.

"Sphynx seemed very reactionary at the time," says Turner, "but in a way it wasn't, because I was able to embrace all these punk bands at the Roundhouse" (Tanz der Youth were joined by Blood Donor, whose synth player, Keith Hayles, later joined Hawkwind!, and the speed poets John Cooper Clarke and Patrick Fitzgerald). But there was another link with the past along for the ride as well – Michael Moorcock.

Like Turner, Moorcock's involvement with Hawkwind had lessened somewhat over the years; since *Warrior on the Edge/New World's Fair*, his activities were essentially restricted to lending his name to Michael Butterworth's *Time of the Hawklords* partial novelization of the old *Codename Hawkwind* cartoon strip (a projected trilogy, the series was scuppered after two volumes, allegedly because of the difficulty in keeping up with the real Hawkwind's constantly shifting membership).

Moorcock had retained his interest in rock'n'roll, however; had retained, too, the Deep Fix band name debuted on *New World's Fair*. But the Love In was to be their last show, "a celebration," Moorcock later said, "of the end of an era. It really did feel like that."

Not for Sphynx it wasn't! With *Xitintoday* scheduled for release the following month, the band hit the road immediately, heading down to Stonehenge with the full band and dancers entourage, and setting up amidst the stones at 3 o'clock in the morning.

"It was actually a very good performance," Turner recalls. "We went on at 4 am, and it was must have been fantastic for the people who were there; suddenly this great magic show turned up, with dancers, it was really very competent, really electric!"

Sphynx were present at virtually every free festival staged that summer, from Stonehenge and Glastonbury to Findhorn and Saffron Walden, setting up their portable pyramid stage wherever they could, and simply putting on a show.

"But as the summer ended, I started to wonder 'where am I going? This thing isn't a very commercial venture; I ought to be doing something that's a bit more street level and relevant.' And out of Sphynx developed Inner City Unit."

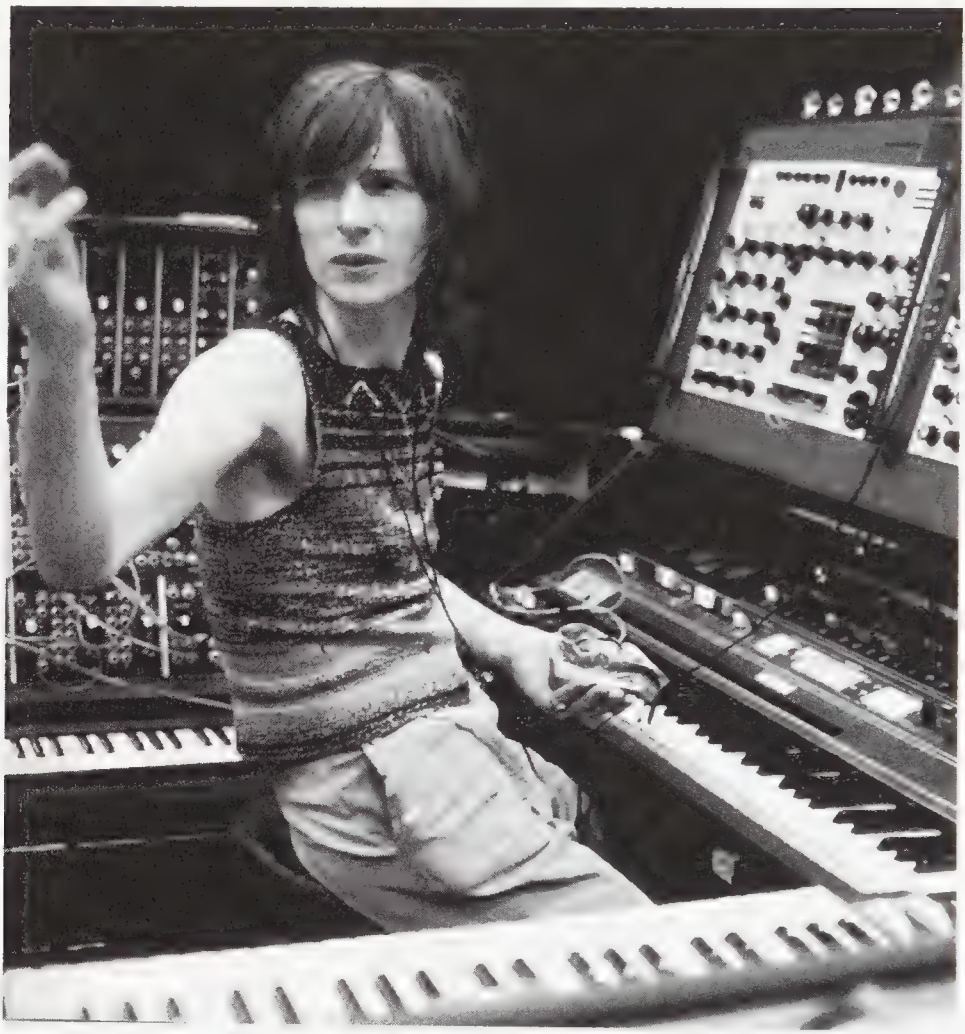
Sphynx bowed out at the 1979 Glastonbury festival, with a special concert organized for the benefit of the BBC's cameras. According to Turner, "they were making a documentary on reincarnation, and invited me along, I think, because a few weeks earlier, *the Sun* newspaper ran a center page spread on the subject, and I featured in that."

The full Sphynx performance was filmed (although only a few minutes were actually aired); then, with their mummy-wraps hung up for the final time, the band members reappeared onstage at 1am, introduced themselves as ICU, "and played all night. We got a really bad reputation at Glastonbury, they told us we'd ruined the whole festival for everybody because we'd broken the curfew."

He pauses, still incredulous at the thought. "Curfews? At Glastonbury? We just stuck two fingers in the air at them."

chapter eight

A New Jerusalem



Hawkwind throughout the 1980s was essentially a squirming mass of musical confusion. Personnel difficulties, as usual, played the biggest part in the band's decline – whereas in the past, new recruits were generally pulled from within the vast pool of Pinkwind graduates, Dave Brock now drew on whichever resources became available.

Former Cream drummer Ginger Baker played out a mutually unsatisfactory six months with the band between 1980-81; other names – Martin Griffin, John Clark and Bridget Wishart – seemingly appeared out of nowhere, at least so far as the Hawkwind family tree was concerned.

Bob Calvert had rejoined in 1976; he quit in '79, and never did come back. Although both swiftly became cult favorites, neither of Calvert's solo albums had achieved much – and that despite both *Captain Lockheed & The Starfighters and Lucky Lief & the Longships* enjoying contributions from most of Hawkwind, plus Paul Rudolph, Twink, Michael Moorcock, Arthur Brown and even Eno, (appearing within the comparative anonymity of his multitudinous christian names alone).

Calvert's return to Hawkwind, coinciding with the band's move to the Charisma label, coincided too with the group's musical lurch into considerably brighter-sounding directions – how ironic, then, that when he did go solo again, *Hype, Freq* and *Test-tube Conceived* should rank amongst his darkest ever recordings!

These, too, had little commercial impact, and as Hawkwind's own twentieth anniversary approached, Calvert was reportedly considering a fresh invitation to join the group. He never had the chance to make up his mind. On August 14th, 1988, he suffered a heart attack at his home in England. Aged 43, Captain Lockheed was dead.

There were other changes. Manager Doug Smith was fired after a decade in control – "our money was always disappearing when Douglas was in charge of it," Dave Brock later said. And while founder members Nik Turner and Huw Lloyd Langton did reappear, Turner stayed for just two musically uneventful years, while Langton had spent more time in sundry Heavy Metal bands than he ever had in Hawkwind. He remained on board this time for eleven riff-sodden years, and played his part in the band's downfall accordingly.

Amidst all these comings and goings, there was one moment of sheer inspiration, when Gong's brilliant synth player, Tim Blake, was recruited to bring unity to two streams of consciousness which had for so long seemed set to converge.

Blake it was who led Hawkwind to perhaps their greatest triumphs of the era, contributing heavily to both the *Live 1979* and *Levitation* albums, and encouraging the band to restructure its in-concert set around his own "New Jerusalem". Amidst Hawkwind's trademark sagas of sonic assassins and silver machines, Blake's magical invocation of Arthurian heroism seemed strangely apposite.

Fittingly, Blake made his Hawkwind debut at the 1979 Science Fiction Festival in Leeds; he left, however, under less glamorous circumstances, left stranded at a Hanley hotel after Brock lost patience with his habit of making long phone calls to his girlfriend in France. Blake has since returned to solo work, both recording and touring with considerable regularity.

Hawkwind's status within the marketplace shifted somewhat more subtly than their personnel, but by the mid-1980s, the die was finally

cast.

Beginning around 1981, when the Flicknife independent finally gave official release to the band's original 1970 UA demo – "Hurry On Sundown" and "Sweet Mistress of Pain", and climaxing a decade later, when it was estimated that there were now some seventy Hawkwind CDs on the market, their "official" output notwithstanding, it seemed that every Hawkwind recording on the planet, live or studio, hi-fi or low-grade, had been given an authorized release – often without even the most rudimentary reference to recording dates and personnel.

Even purchasing the band's biggest hits became a crapshoot for the undiscerning collector. In 1972, Hawkwind themselves earned a tiny slice of notoriety when they unleashed three separate mixes of "7x7" across sundry worldwide pressings of "Silver Machine". Now, there were a dozen different live renditions of "Masters of the Universe", spread over *thirty-six* different albums; another twelve "Silver Machine"-s, rambling over thirty. Nine versions of "Brainstorm", six of "Sonic Attack"... mis- and retitled song mushrooming in the darkest corners.

One of the most important catalogs in modern rock history, *the* most important in the annals of Space Rock, has been reduced to a pig circus, and though token attempts at restoring some kind of order have been attempted by brave individuals – Cleopatra's *Psychedelic Warlords* and *Lords of Light* collections gathered together all the band's early non-album singles; Virgin's *Tales from Atomhenge* did the same for the end of the 70s – it is only to see their efforts undermined by more comprehensive-looking collections... which inevitably turn out to be another heap of hogwash. *The Hawkwind Anthology, The Complete Collection, The Best and the Rest Of* – is it any wonder that Hawkwind sales dipped to all-time lows as the 80s progressed?

Almost equally damaging, however, was the general public perception of Hawkwind. Still performing regularly at Stonehenge and the reborn Glastonbury event, the band also appeared at 1982's Monsters of Rock festival, confirming what a lot of the band's detractors had been saying all along... that Hawkwind were simply a Metal band with a lot of fancy electronics.

Stripped of those fancy electronics, stripped, too, of the degree of skewed-pop individuality which Calvert, Turner and Blake brought to their later prolusions, Hawkwind now stood defenseless against such accusations – so if they couldn't beat 'em, they joined 'em. The band's adoption by Britain's Heavy Metal community – at a time when Metal was so hidebound by tradition that the genre was all but worthless – looked like the final nail in a once-proud coffin. The new definition did not always match the band's music, but it came close a lot of the time. Too close.

Thus, a partial return to the on-stage extravagance of old, the 1983 *Chronicles of the Black Sword* tour, passed many people by unseen; thus a devastating performance at the Reading Festival three years later was ignored because it was rebroadcast by the headbangers' favorite, Radio One's Friday Rock Show... it was to be another decade before *Electric Teepee* proved there was still a little life left in those rusty old fuel rods.

It wasn't great Hawkwind, but at least they were back on course... only fifteen years after the liner notes to *Quark, Strangeness and Charm* so erroneously delivered that same claim.

Hawkwind's regeneration, both as a musical power and as a cultural icon, developed not from within their own musical circles, but from way, way beyond, in the realms of the new-born Acid House/Rave scene.

In many ways, Rave was a logical progression from where Hawkwind left off following the Space Ritual, where the Fairies and Gong went adrift around the same time; and where the early Kraut Rockers were pointing before they, too, began dancing to a different beat.

There was the revitalization of the touring disc jockey, the new Andy Dunkleys and Jerry Floyds, working their music between band and crowd; the use of music (and, of course, drugs... it wasn't called Acid House for nothing!) as a means of expanding one's dreams. The same cycles of repetition as Hawkwind and the Fairies had played out two decades earlier, the same emphasis on moods of spacious ambience with which Tangerine Dream and Can forged their reputations, but all combined this time beneath the overall umbrella of electronic/Techno music.

Many of the ethics espoused by the first generation Space Rockers, too, were reborn in Rave – the hitherto outdated notions of love and peace, a burgeoning understanding of ecological issues, and the primal urge – in the parlance of either generation – to simply "freak out".

The so-called Second Summer of Love which hit Britain in 1988 was, of course, simply the media-fired culmination of a movement which had been building for several years at that point; still, it cannot be denied that there was something singularly impressive (not to mention nostalgic!) about upwards of two thousand people gathering in one out-of-the-way spot for a night – if the media is to be even partially believed – of hallucinogenic music and drugs.

Dave Brock was particularly encouraged by the new wind blowing through the grassroots of the British music scene, going so far as to bring "two guys... who do a lot of Acid House music using sampled sounds and effects" on stage with Hawkwind when they played Brixton Academy in 1992.

"They've got Jimi Hendrix playing the guitar on it, and Bob [Calvert] doing the vocals," Brock enthused. Such musical possibilities were in perfect harmony with the Hawkwind zeitgeist – had not Del Dettmar in

fact pioneered the art of sampling, two decades before, when he fed Andy Dunkley's record collection through the swirling Hawkwind PA?

If Hawkwind represented the spiritual fathers of the now-burgeoning Acid scene (which itself was swift to splinter as the 1990s progressed), it only followed that the Rave culture would swiftly spawn some children of its own, although it took the movement's original aversion to both live instruments, and live performance itself, to open the doors to them – that, and the adoption of certain musicians and ideas which had otherwise been flailing in a comparative vacuum.

The Legendary Pink Dots were formed at the tail end of the punk era, during that difficult period when the Goth and Industrial scenes were still struggling to isolate themselves from the New Wave's body politik, and the whimsical psychedelic revival which Tanz der Youth had so boldly predicted in 1978 was finally taking hold. Isolating the mannerisms, if not the sheer musical genius, of the Barrett-era Pink Floyd, the Soft Boys' Robyn Hitchcock, Julian Cope, even XTC and the Cure's Robert Smith, were sitting themselves comfortably cross-legged in the garden of English eccentricity.

In truth, the Pink Dots' antecedents were unquestionably rooted in the more *outre* elements of Gong, with vocalist Edward Ka-Spel's own faintly Barrett-esque mysticism replacing Daevid Allen's tales of octave doctors and Witch Yoni's pussy. While elements of the Industrial field would, eventually, collide head-on with Space Rock (most notably, Psychic TV, a band who were never particularly comfortable with that genre anyway, and the Front Line Assembly spin-off Delirium), only Alien Sex Fiend truly crossed over from Goth. Science fiction lyrics combined with a genuine taste for extended live work-outs, and the band even covered "Silver Machine" (on 1988's *Another Planet*) – faithfully!

The Pink Dots, then, were wholly out on a limb; they were strange, and they suffered for their strangeness. By the mid 1980s, the Pink Dots had relocated to Amsterdam, the last surviving bastion of Europe's Stoned Immaculate, not returning their attention westwards until 1987's *Stone Circles* anthology, and the same year's *Tired Eyes* Teargarden union between Ka-Spel and the Canadian industrialists Skinny Puppy, won favorable receptions in both the UK and America.

But still the going was tough. Having already made one well-received US visit, in 1988, the band believed they needed simply to apply for new work visas when it came time to tour again, following the release of 1990's *The Maria Dimension.*

It turned out they also needed to have been making better records! *The Maria Dimension* was the band's most overtly spacey album yet, echoing the perceptions of subsequent Teargarden collaborations. But the group's visa applications were rejected, says Ka-Spel, due to "a lack of

artistic merit." The following year, they were approved, "and I can just see them all in the immigration department bopping away under their headphones, going 'ah, those Pink Dots, they've redeemed themselves!'"

Other tours have suffered for other reasons. According to Ka-Spel, he has learned of his own suicide on three separate occasions, including once from an Austrian promoter who refused to book the Pink Dots because he had it on very good authority that their singer was dead! And if it isn't suicide, it's the persistent legends of his own acid-intake which continue to haunt him. "I don't know why people make up these stories

Legendary Pink Dots

about me!"

In the simplest terms. the Pink Dots (and that handful of other bands then operating within the realms of what would eventually be misnamed "ambient", or New Age music) were originally adopted for the Rave community by DJs and audiences searching for a means of recovering from the increasingly frenetic Beats Per Minute count which was pervading more conventional Acid circles – in Germany, following in the footsteps of the still-energetic Popol Vuh, Sven Vath was creating his own (Tangerine) dream-laden synthscapes for similar reasons.

"'New Age Music'," says Popol Vuh's Florian Fricke, "[seems to be] a collective name for music which is not played in discos, but addresses itself in various ways to your inner self, your soul. The strand of electronic music that you call 'Space Rock' has now become part of 'New Age

Music'; other strands are developing individually into new styles and names of the future."

The Dots' role in this development is undeniable, particularly in western Europe and the UK. By the end of the 1980s, the scene which they had very much (if unwittingly) pioneered had widened sufficiently to permit three very separate schools of musical thought into the same essential marketplace: the spiraling mysteries unlocked by the Dots, the electronic free-fall of the Orb, and the almost-traditional Space Rock of Ozric Tentacles – *almost*-traditional, because after the *Challenger* disaster, nothing to do with space travel, not even fantasy, could ever be the

same again.

The Ozrics, like the Pink Dots, had been around for several years prior to their commercial acknowledgement; indeed, if their music can be compared to that of Hawkwind, so their development, too, has much in common with that role model. The band even formed at Stonehenge, during the 1983 free festival, and while the band's music promptly took a turn away from the hypnotic riffing of their best-known forebears, moving instead into more improvisational fields (which the media promptly dubbed "Space Jazz"), the similarities do not end there.

Like Hawkwind, the Ozrics have managed to maintain a sense of humor lacking amongst many of their contemporaries. As *Vox* magazine

explained, "while the Orb possess the pioneering spirit of... their idols, Soft Machine, Hawkwind and Gong... the Ozrics play on their excesses."

Soft Machine took their name from a William Burroughs book; the Ozrics chose theirs' because they thought it sounded like a breakfast cereal... and a decade later, reissuing their earliest cassette-only albums as a limited boxed set, the band did indeed design the package as though it were a new brand of corn flakes – and at least one of the discs, the murky 1983 *Erpsongs*, to sound like them.

Things got better after that, both in terms of sonics and focus – if *Erpsongs* can be compared to Hawkwind, *circa* the "We Do It" jams which crop up from time to time on new compilations, by the time of their third album, 1986's *Live Ethereal Cereal* (recorded, as it name suggests, in concert), they were at least approaching the Hawks' Glastonbury/Greasy Truckers tapes, albeit with a somewhat greater awareness of "World Music" (such a hateful term!) – Arabia, the Far East, and even a hint of Kingston, Jamaica, creep into the brew!

Of course it's an acquired taste, of course it's mostly preposterous – anything which can have even *Record Collector* magazine unable to distinguish between Outer Mongolia and outer space (as did 1988's *Sliding Gliding Worlds* album), could hardly be anything else!

But it's a deliberate effect. Echoing one of Dave Brock's best-remembered pronouncements, keyboard player Joie Hinton admitted, "we find it amazing that we're getting away with it. It's a bit of a joke on the music industry, isn't it?"

From the beginning, the Ozrics were most at home amongst "their own people" – the New Age travelers and gypsy rave communities which littered the British landscape throughout the 1980s. The band themselves fed this imagery, and though the total opposite is now true, it is still widely believed, as Hinton explained, "that we all live together in a big house and take acid everyday."

Even as they worked to maintain their caricature hippy image, however, the Ozrics' ambitions rocketed skywards. An ambitious slide- and lightshow was pieced together from the proceeds from the sale of the band's jam tapes, and in 1991, the band formed their own label, Dovetail Records, and inked a US deal with IRS. An April 1994 American tour, climaxing at the Whisky in L.A. at the end of the month, was a certifiable sell-out. The band opened a 24 track recording studio in a 16th century mill in rural Somerset, and celebrated their absolute independence when 1993's *Jurassic Shift* rocketed to #11 in the UK album charts.

If the Ozrics do emphasize excess with a smile, the Orb turned a considerably more serious face towards much the same ideals, at the same time as catapulting themselves out of ambient obscurity by matching up with one of their musical masters, guitarist Steve Hillage.

Since *L* provided Hillage with the commercial breakthrough which had always eluded Gong, the guitarist had strived long and hard to rid himself of the wooly-hatted image with which his past (and, to a certain extent, his style) had saddled him. It was not a particularly easy task, especially in the wake of Punk, and Hillage himself only exaggerated his own image in a 1978 interview with the *New Musical Express*.

Promoting his fourth solo album, *Green*, he regaled the surprised journalist not with the expected tales of pixies and teapots, but with a lengthy dissertation on the superior intelligence of cabbages.

But he also linked briefly with Jimmy Pursey, the charismatic vocalist with Sham 69, proving his willingness to work far beyond his established parameters, and his last albums of the decade, *Open* and *Rainbow Dome Musick*, saw Hillage moving into an uncompromising, and surprisingly successful dalliance with dance music (! – the 1992 *Radio One Live In Concert* album best illustrates just how staggering Hillage's transition was, serving up two sensational songs from a 1976 broadcast, and nine... less so... from 1979.)

Sporadic albums spread across the first half of the 1980s, and a bizarrely successful production job on Simple Minds' *Sons and Fascination* album (during which Hillage reputedly kept a potted plant in the studio, to give him someone to talk to) maintained Hillage's commercial profile, and then... nothing.

He reappeared (accompanied, of course, by Miquette Giraudy) on *Adventures Beyond the Underworld*, the Orb's 1991 debut album. It was a fascinating combination.

Formed two years previous, the Orb – Alex Paterson and Jimmy Cauty – were originally mere stablemates of the considerably more successful KLF/JAMS conglomerate, adhering to their already proven (but occasionally, legally discredited) principle that all recorded music is fair game to the sharp-eyed young men with their sampling machines.

The first Orb release, the 12" *Kiss* EP, was constructed almost exclusively from samples lifted from the KISS FM radio station; their second, "The Huge Ever-Growing Pulsating Brain That Rules from the Center of the Ultraworld" orbited around samples from Minnie Riperton's 1975 hit "Loving You".

It was a white label dance mix of "Brain" which set the pace for future Orb releases; with the Riperton sample excised, the track simply became one long slice of ambience, through which echoed and swirled every effect that could be wrung through the duo's own Trancentral studio (incredibly, "Brain" was created on an 8 Track console, an organ and a drum machine alone).

This release was eventually scrapped after recipients of the white label called up demanding to know "Where's the fucking sample?". But

when the Orb's next single, "Fluffy White Clouds", was hit by a writ from its sampled guest star, Rickie Lee Jones, the duo returned to the compo-

sitional purity of the remixed "Brain", leaving that other field open to the KLF (whose very name is an acronym – Kopyright Liberation Front).

Breaking with KLF traditions, breaking, too, with the KLF themselves (an acrimonious split which also sundered the Orb's own unity), the Orb – now Paterson and ex-Fortran 5-er Kristian "Thrash" Weston – originally intended *Ultraworld* as a triple album. "But there was no way... anyone would release a triple album by an unknown artist." The Orb's label, Big Life, conceded a mere double (plus a third, limited edition, disc of remixes).

Hillage brought more than a weighty reputation to the project. He also introduced the Orb to the organic purity of Gong's original sonics, recreating in full the effects which Paterson, Thrash, and a growing coterie of attendant DJs had hitherto only been able to duplicate – glissando guitar and space whispers included. Bridging the musical gap... bridging the generation gap as well. Past-time Potheads who might never have looked at a 1990s copyright record flocked to the Orb's banner; the Orb responded by expanding their own musical horizons via the satellite project 777.

Hillage's influence on the Orb is perhaps most pronounced on "Blue Room", which became the Orb's first UK Top Ten single in June, 1992, despite clocking in at a staggering 39 minutes and 58 seconds!

The track was co-written by the Orb, Hillage, Giraudy and former PiL bassist Jah Wobble – whose unmistakable "Death Disco" lines couple with High Priestess Aisha's chanted vocals as the focalpoint of the performance.

But it is what is taking place beneath the rhythm which matters, the snatches of conversation, the stop-start roars, and the vivid sense, almost visual in its clarity, of planets colliding, galaxies imploding, and astronauts floating to a lonely death at the end of a severed lifeline (the Orb's logo, of course, is a spaceman). In the context of Space Rock, the first thirteen minute movement of "Blue Room" is as frighteningly desolate a piece of music as anything since the Floyd first opened their saucerful of secrets, the legacy of the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster taken to the utmost reaches of the universe.

UFOrb, the band's second album, maintained the theme through a cycle of songs inspired by a small library of extra-terrestrial literature – Timothy Good's *Alien Liaisons* and *Above Top Secret*, Zecharia Witchin's *Genesis Revisited*, Bill Cooper's *Behold a Pale Face* and Frank Waters' *Book of the Hopi*.

Unlike Hawkwind, whose invocation of their science fiction influences was expounded in lyrics and titles, the Orb's largely wordless explorations are relevant only in the eye of the beholder – "Close Encounters" and the title track alone make explicit reference to the UFO theme, while the Orb's most overt homage to the past, a cover of Hawkwind's "Silver Machine", not only remains unreleased, it is in any case counteracted by the brutal rendition of the Stooges' "No Fun" which was premiered on the band's third John Peel session in May, 1992.

The Orb's Peel appearances (the second of which saw the basic duo augmented by Hillage and Giraudy) rank amongst their most compulsive performances, all the more so since the first (a twenty minute version of "Brain") caught Paterson and Cauty reacting not only to their immediate

surroundings (they redecorated the BBC studio as a living room), but to a producer who clearly failed to understand the Orb.

"I just started throwing all these samples at Jimmy," Paterson later explained, "waves, birdsong, jets, old sci-fi excerpts, those 'aaahs' off Grace Jones' 'Slave to the Rhythm'... we were finding it so entertaining to defeat this producer bloke!"

Where the Orb, and to a lesser degree, the more danceable 777, succeed (but so many other would-be ambient Space Rockers fail) is in their understanding of the power of the individual listener's imagination.

They appreciate, too, the need for subtlety, and regard the mixing process not simply as a means of distributing the composite sounds, but of creating a sensory balance – comparing the Orb's *Live 93* album with Hawkwind's two-decade old *Space Ritual* might appear a redundant exercise, but disregard the organic purity of one, the electro-trickery of the other, and in terms of overall ambience, there are many similarities.

Acknowledging this, acknowledging, also, that the handful of other bands who have adopted slices either of Hawkwind's imagery or repertoire are obeying an urge which, in modern rock'n'roll, can be considered almost primal, is the greatest compliment which can be applied to those hoary old Space Rock pioneers.

That only a handful of bands are confident, or callous, enough to borrow wholesale from the Hawks' legacy simply accentuates this. Many bands are revered enough to provoke a host of soundalikes; few are visionary enough to lay the groundwork for entire new excursions.

Thus, Chrome's psychedelic metal, the Thing's cover of "It's So Easy", and Monster Magnet's sonic absorption of the entire *Doremi-Space Ritual*-era (faithfully regurgitated in a cover of "Brainstorm", included on their 1993 album *Superjudge*) are better regarded as tributes than tribut*ar*ies, whereas great swathes of Pressurehed's *Sudden Vertigo* album (within which lurks a sterling recreation of Bob Calvert's "Right Stuff"!), and Sky Cries Mary's swirling recreations of all that Hawkwind *represented* are derivative only for as long as one refuses to listen.

Pressurehed, to all intents and purposes, are the heralds, if not of a new wave in Space Rock, at least of a harsh deviation. The band's firm industrial roots often overwhelm the members' own musical tastes, leaving only glimpses of what might have been to surface amidst the noise. It's still exciting, still a thrill to listen to. And while most of the album sets you flying, the driving "God's House", and the spiraling "Slo Blo" really put you into orbit.

Sky Cries Mary, on the other hand, justifiably argue that their approach is in total opposition to those bands with whom they might be compared – vocalist/founder Roderick even insists he only discovered

Hawkwind, introduced to their music by Mudhoney's Mark Arm, *after* the rest of his vision was in place – by which time the Seattle-based band had already absorbed, recreated, and then reached out from a psychedelic culture which had no possible antecedents in the United States. *The Timeless Turning*, the band's 1994 album, ranks alongside even primal Hawkwind in terms of grasping the essence of Space Rock. Heavy improvisation seeps into the most structured songs, with the band's live performances truly touching dimensions which rock 'n' roll (particularly American rock 'n' roll) has left untouched for years.

While it can be argued that both Acid Rock and its House/Rave offspring were originally US inventions, imported to Britain from San Francisco and Detroit respectively, both mutated far beyond the understanding of an American audience the moment they set foot on English soil.

Repackaged and offered back to the American mainstream, however, neither *in their purest form* took root. Even at their most successful, Hawkwind and Gong remained cult figures at best, while Pink Floyd only grasped the golden ring once their original *avant-garde* tendencies had been tamed by six albums-worth of post-Barrett experimenting. *Dark Side of the Moon* might have been their most successful album, but in terms of adventure, it was also their drabbest. "A blues band with alarm

clocks," as Richard Thompson irreverently put it.

In drawing their own precedents, then, from what can most easily (and least esoterically) be described as a collision between the live half of *Ummagumma* and a mid-period Incredible String Band, spaced-out blues meeting acid ethnicity, Sky Cries Mary not only bucked two decades of national tradition, they also flew in the face of their hometown's best-known export.

The nucleus of Anisa Romero and Roderick emerged in 1991, just as Seattle's so-called grunge scene first began girding its loins for a world-wide break-out; earlier SCM recordings – the Europe-only album *Until the Grinders Cease* (1989) and EP *Don't Eat the Dirt* (1990) – were crude excursions into brutal industrial areas; the arrival of the operatically-trained Romero, explains Roderick, simultaneously prompted, and coincided with ,his own realization that he had more to say through his music than "a simple outpouring of 'this is shit, you are shit, I am shit...'.

"And when we did start doing songs that were more positive, the reward was so much greater in the sense of having a very positive effect both on us and on the audience."

Put simply, people enjoy a show; want to lose themselves in a performance, want to come out at the end feeling as though they have witnessed an *event*, not just "another bunch of blokes-next-door playing guitar in their sneakers." And if they can get something spiritual out of it, all the better.

The gradual emergence of a Seattle rave scene connected Sky Cries Mary with both its audience, and an integral part of its future line-up, electronics whizz DJ Fallout. And while the ensuing *Exit at the Access* EP remains little more than a tentative glimpse into the potential majesty of the SCM performance, by the time of 1993's *Return to the Inner Experience*, the group was confidently wrestling not only with their own ideas ("Rain", a distinctly Floydian showcase for Romero and Roderick's unearthly harmonies and the 25 minute *Timeless Turning* out-take "*Death Of A Star*"), but with other people's too.

Their vivid amplification of the Stooges' "We Will Fall" (from *Inner Experience*) not only returns what was already the most atypical song in Iggy Pop's entire repertoire to its original source – the "My Wild Love" chant which he borrowed from the Doors, but which they in turn lifted from Sufi qawwali, it also connects wholly with the very spirituality which Roderick believes lies at the heart of the band. During her teenaged years, Romero was stricken with a cancer which came close to ending her life. Amongst the weapons she deployed against it was "We Will Fall".

Elsewhere, Sky Cries Mary's cover of the Rolling Stones' "2,000 Light Years From Home" remains so definitive a vision that when Roderick

jokingly complained that "Brian Jones got into a time machine, saw us playing it, and took it back to the Stones," *Alternative Press* journalist Jo-Ann Greene admitted, "he's laughing, but you know what? I believe him!"

Few bands have the power to make such a statement seem so believable.

POSTSCRIPT
The Prophets of Time

The emergence of Rave, the rapidly growing success of the Ozrics and the Orb, these events sent repercussions echoing throughout the Space Rock community. Twink united with psychedelic revivalist Bevis Frond, adding a genuine acid-tint to Nick Salomon's traditionally addle-fried vision, then resurfaced in 1990 with his second solo album, *Mr. Rainbow*, recutting "some of the best songs I've been associated with over the years, my celebration of 25 years of recording."

The Fairies' "Wargirl", "Teenage Rebel", "Do It" and "The Snake" each won storming reruns, along with two cuts from the Pretty Things' *SF Sorrow* – "Baron Saturday" and "Balloon Burning", which in execution, if not intention, might well prompt yet another re-evaluation of an album which carbon-dating has already established as both the first, and the finest, Rock Opera – conceived and recorded some two years before *Tommy* irreparably hamstringed the nascent genre, and the Kinks' then kicked the resultant cripple.

Twink himself views *Mr. Rainbow* as a Space Rock album, acknowledging this when he describes his next album, the ephemera-packed *Odds and Beginnings* as featuring "a couple of tracks left over from *Mr. Rainbow*, which didn't fit in with the overall Space Rock concept of that album." Actually, he's doing himself a disservice – *Odds*, despite the ragged gathering of sundry singles, remakes and a reunion of the original pre-Pink Fairies of which it comprises, has more than its fair share of manic moments.

Twink returned to the stage as well, and 1993 saw him forging a new Pinkwind alliance with Nik Turner, described by Turner as "the two of us, and some other friends of Twink's" (Twink told *Record Collector* magazine that "there are about seven [ex-members] signed up as a basic working unit").

"I was initially brought into it by Twink with the promise that Dikmik and Terry Ollis were going to be in the band," Turner continues. "But when I turned up for the first gig, neither of them were there – Terry was babysitting, which seems a bit incongruous, and Dikmik was out of town. But we got on well and the music was quite good, people seemed to like it and we've actually been getting a lot of gigs."

"It's something that's been in the back of my mind for years," Twink

continues, "because Pinkwind goes back to the early days of the two bands. It was such a great feeling then, that the seed was always there waiting to be sown. We started to really pull it together again around June, 1993, and we were aiming at 1994 to do the live shows. But we were offered the Festival of the Sun in Norwich in August; we did it, and out of that we got ten more gigs which took us up till Christmas."

Amongst the most notable absentees from the Pinkwind shows were Duncan Sanderson, Russell Hunter and Larry Wallis (now leading a new band, the Red Birds) – they were busily preparing a Pink Fairies revival of their own! And Pinkwind itself went on hold in the new year, while Nik Turner headed for America to promote his second solo album in less than a year, *The Prophets of Time*.

Midway through 1993, the LA based Cleopatra label approached Turner about reissuing the 1978 Sphynx album. With one Hawkwind compilation already on the catalog (*Psychedelic Warlords*), and a second (*Lord of Light*, like its predecessor largely comprised of rare UA-era material) imminent, it was a well-conceived notion. "Then we discovered that Virgin Records owned the tapes and didn't want to license it, so we recorded a new version," says Turner. "I had tapes of the flute parts, and we rerecorded the lyrics."

Although Turner did not meet his fellow musicians until the album was complete (the wonders of the postal service!) working with Pressurehed and former Chrome guitarist Helios Creed, Turner acknowledged, allowed him to "put it together in a more modern, industrial way... which worked out so well that we got another record together immediately."

Prophets of Time, arguably, is the album Hawkwind were threatening to make before Calvert's 1976 return sent the band spiraling off down the *Astounding Sounds/Quark, Strangeness and Charm* pop diversion, a statement not of commercial viability or songwriting acumen, but a swirling, howling, roaring mantra which spiraled – like the tour which would accompany its release – through both old and new material.

It was Turner's first full American solo release, his chance to break out of the import cult confines into which past classics had always been consigned. Fresh recordings of the bleak "Children of the Sun", the Radio Actors' "Strontium 90", and a couple of ICU failsafes were included, alongside contributions from Barney Bubbles, Genesis P-Orridge and Michael Moorcock. Simon House even reappeared on violin, but still it was the tour which lifted the most eyebrows – Space Ritual '94.

Alternative Press caught up with the tour on its opening night in Los Angeles. "You've already seen the ads, for Hawkwind, or Nik Turner's Hawkwind, depending on the venue's guile; and while Turner himself

remains adamant that no-one should confuse his band with, say, that *other* Hawkwind (still turning out albums in the UK), he smiles when someone does. 'Well, we do have more original members!'"

Joining Turner, Creed and co on stage was Del Dettmar, lured out of two decades of Canadian retirement, Turner told journalist Chris Nickson, by the promise that "it was a sell-out tour and we were getting lots of money, which isn't really true. But he's got over all that now, and we've all been pleasantly surprised by the way we've been received." In fact, Space Ritual '94 received stunned reviews wherever it played.

Turner himself remained frighteningly modest about the whole thing, as if the recreation and (this is the important part) *revitalization* of a piece of rock history is something he did every day.

No tired one-more-time recital of an aged greatest bits set, Turner breathed new life into the hoariest chestnut – Hawkwind classics like "You Shouldn't Do That", "Brainstorm", "Master of the Universe" and "Silver Machine", ICU's "Ghost Dance" and "Watching the Grass Grow", Calvert's "The Right Stuff" (already recently resuscitated on Pressurehed's *Sudden Vertigo*), nestling alongside a handful of newer numbers from both Turner and Creed, it was suddenly impossible to tell where the past ended and the present began.

There was magic in the air each night, the psychedelic shaman in the barcode glasses with a hubcap round his shoulders, blowing new noises from his flute, ensured that. But Turner credited the band and the audience alone.

"Everyone on stage was a fan," he told *AP*. "When we put together the set, these were the songs they suggested. And the audiences have been phenomenal. It's impossible not to be inspired by their energy."

When the tour hit San Diego, one middle-aged acolyte turned up with a scrapbook and a bagful of forty-plus Hawkwind albums. Turner and Dettmar autographed each one. Later that evening, someone remarked that Dettmar had seen more people in the last 24 hours than he had in the last 20 years. "I live in a very small town," Del replied.

Now he was visiting some big ones – New York, where Twink dropped by to join the band onstage at the Limelight; San Francisco, with guest appearances from P-Orridge and Alan Powell; Seattle, where members of Sky Cries Mary were like kids before Christmas in the crowd. SCM had played the same venue the evening before, and Roderick admitted, "I didn't want to go home afterwards. I just wanted to wait up all night so I'd be there when the band arrived."

That's the kind of devotion which Hawkwind and its multitudinous spin-offs have long since excited in America; that's the devotion which ensured Turner's success, and it cut both ways. He was giving the people

what they wanted – something which Dave Brock's Hawkwind (hilariously renamed Hawkwind UK by one Los Angeles journalist!) seemed to have forgotten about, as *AP* gleefully reminded its readers.

"'I saw Hawkwind last time they were over,' says a heap of hairy tye-dye in a corner at the LA show, 'and it was just three guys playing with keyboards and computers. It was just another techno gig. This – " and he gestured expansively towards Turner *et al* – "is an *experience*. This is an event.'"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I've been waiting twenty years to write this book, ever since I spent two nights (school nights!) in 1974 watching Hawkwind and Gong. From then on, those bands formed my perception of Space Rock; peopled the universe to which their music then took me. So if you dispute, disagree, or even detest my definitions, and the bands I've included... too bad. It's my trip, and I'll take it with whoever I like.

The people who've contributed to this book, in terms of recollections and stories and simple hard facts, reflect my own perceptions as well: interviewed over a period of at least the last ten years, often for sundry completely unrelated projects, I'd like to thank: Ian Anderson; Sean Booth and Rob Brown (Autechre); Angie Bowie; Andy Colquhoin; Thomas Crimble (Skin Alley); Tim Cross and Tom Newman (re Mike Oldfield); Helios Creed; Del Dettmar; Len Del Rio, Paul Fox and Tommy Grenas (Pressurehed); Andy Dunkley; Andy Ellison (John's Children); Mick Farren; Florian Fricke (Popol Vuh); Brian James (Tanz der Youth); Rod Latter and Alan Lee Shaw (ZZZ); Lemmy; Deke Leonard (Man); DJ Lewis (the Orb); Ed, Joie and Zia (Ozric Tentacles), Davy O'List (the Nice); David Lowery (Cracker); Genesis P Orridge; Roderick, Anisa Romero, DJ Fallout and Bennet James (Sky Cries Mary); Duncan Sanderson; Tony Secunda; Richard Thompson; Nik Turner; Twink and Larry Wallis.

Other information has been garnered from a host of magazines, most importantly *Alternative Press, Goldmine, Melody Maker, NME, Record Collector* and *ZigZag*. Various album liner notes and booklets, too, have been helpful (see discography), and while books documenting Space Rock as a palpable genre are thin on the ground, the following all offer interesting pointers and ideas – *Syd Barrett: Crazy Diamond* by Mike Watkinson/Pete Anderson; *Marc Bolan: 20th Century Boy* by Mark Paytress; *The Can Book* by Pascal Bussey/Andy Hall; *This Is Hawkwind – Do Not Panic* by Kris Tait; *Jimi Hendrix: Inside the Experience* by Mitch Mitchell/John Platt; *Kraftwerk* by Pascal Bussey; and *Pink Floyd – A Visual Documentary* by Miles. The following general works may also be of interest: *Awopbopaloobop* by Nik Cohn; *Future Rock* by David Downing; Rock *Family Trees* by Pete Frame; and *The Tale of Willy's Rats* by Mick Farren.

For other assistance, thanks to Brian Perera; Chris Nickson, co-conspirator in filling the house with old records, a tireless mine of truly arcane information, and source of the Arthur Brown interview; Grant Alden; Rick Chafen; Rick Dodderidge; Matt "Urban Dogs Rule" Green;

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OUT, DEMONS OUT!

Discography

Space permits only a cursory glance at even the most essential progenitors' discography – what follows is a wholly subjective guide to Space Rock and, as such, an acknowledgement that the story of Space Rock is not necessarily the full story of the artists who make it.

Because discographies note "recommended" releases only, current CD catalog numbers are given wherever applicable. Releases currently unavailable on CD are noted as LPs. Issue dates noted are those of the original release. All releases are US except as noted.

CHAPTER ONE: THE SPACE RITUAL

HAWKWIND

CDs/LPs

1970 *Hawkwind*	One Way 57658
1971 *In Search of Space*	One Way 57474
1972 *Doremi Faso Latido*	One Way 57475
1973 *Space Ritual*	One Way 57659
1974 *Hall of the Mountain Grill*	One Way 57660
1975 *Warrior on the Edge of Time*	Griffin 04931
1992 *Psychedelic Warlords* (rarities 1970-75)	Cleopatra 5741
1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists)	Buccaneer BUC 029 (b)
1993 *Lord of Light* (1972-85)	Cleopatra 5773

LPS

1972 *Greasy Truckers* (various artists)	UA UDX 203/204 (UK)
1975 *Roadhawks* (best of 1970-75)	UA UAK 29919 (UK)
1988 *In the Beginning* (live/demos 1970-72)	Demi Monde 5 (UK)

see also Amon Düül II (c6), Del Dettmar (c7), Michael Moorcock (c7), Motorhead (c7), Skin Alley (c5), Sphinx (c7), Nik Turner (c8)

PINK FAIRIES

CDs/LPs

1971 *Never Never Land*	Polydor 2184 (Jap)
1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists)	Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)
1972 *What A Bunch of Sweeties*	Polydor 2185 (Jap)
1973 *Kings of Oblivion*	Polydor 2186 (Jap)
1975 *Flashback* (best of 1971-73)	Polydor 843894 (UK)

see also Twink (c3), UFO (c5)

CHAPTER TWO: SET THE CONTROLS...

SYD BARRETT

CDs/LPs

1969 *The Madcap Laughs*	Capitol 246607
1970 *Barrett*	Capitol 246606
1988 *Opel* (out-takes 1969-70)	Capitol 291206
1993 *Octopus* (best of 1969-70)	Cleopatra 5771
1993 *Crazy Diamond* (3 CD box)	Harvest 814135 (UK)

see also Pink Floyd

ARTHUR BROWN

CDs/LPs

1969 *Crazy World of Arthur Brown*	Polydor 833 736
1972 *Galactic Zoo Dossier*	Voiceprint VP 135
1973 *Kingdom Come*	Voiceprint VP 136
1973 *Journey*	Voiceprint VP 137
1989 *Strangelands* (1969 out-takes etc)	Restless RECK 2

LPs

1976 *Lost Ears* (1969-72 out-takes etc)	Gull GUD 003/4 (UK)

JIMI HENDRIX

CDs/LPs

1967 *Are You Experienced?*	MCA 10893
1968 *Axis, Bold as Love*	MCA 10894
1968 *Electric Ladyland*	MCA 10895
1993 *The Ultimate Experience* (best of 1967-70)	MCA 10829

PINK FLOYD

CDs

1967 *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*	Capitol 246384
1968 *Saucerful of Secrets*	Capitol 246383
1968 *More* (soundtrack)	Capitol 246386
1969 *Ummagumma*	Capitol 246404
1970 *Atom Heart Mother*	Capitol 246381
1970 *Zabriskie Point* (various artists soundtrack)	MGM 285 (UK)
1971 *Meddle*	Capitol 246034
1972 *Obscured by Clouds* (soundtrack)	Capitol 246385
1981 *Works*	Capitol 246478
1990 *Interstellar Overdrive* EP	See For Miles 2 (UK)
1992 *Early Singles* (within *Shine On* box)	Columbia 53180 LPs

LPs

1970 *Relics*	Harvest 759
1974 *Masters of Rock*	Harvest 1C 054-04 299 (Ger)

see also Syd Barrett

CHAPTER THREE: THE PSYCHEDELIC WARLORDS

THE DEVIANTS

CD

1969 *Deviants*	Line 00619 (Ger)

LPs

1967 *Ptooff!*	Sire 97001
1968 *Disposable*	Sire 97005

see also Mick Farren, Twink

MICK FARREN

CD

1970 *Carnivorous Circus*	Line 00620 (Ger)

see also the Deviants, Twink

TWINK

CD

1970 *Think Pink*	Line (Ger)
1977 *The Psychedelic Punkeroo* EP	Chiswick SWT28 (UK)
1990 *Mr Rainbow*	Twink 1 (UK)

LP

1991 *Odds and Beginnings*	Twink 2 (UK)

see also the Deviants, Mick Farren, Pink Fairies (c1),

TYRANNOSAURUS REX

CDs

1968 *My People Were Fair....*	Demon (UK)
1968 *Prophets, Seers & Sages*	Demon (UK)
1969 *Unicorn*	Demon (UK)
1970 *Beard of Stars*	Demon (UK)
1982 *Across the Airwaves* (BBC Radio sessions)	Cube 12 (Jap)
1992 *Radio One In Concert* (live 1970)	Windsong WINCD 032 (UK)
1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists)	Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)
1993 *The Definitive* (best of 1968-70)	Sequel NEX 250 (UK)

LPs

1981 *20th Century Boy* (3LP best of 1966-77)	EMI MARC 1 (Aus)

CHAPTER FOUR: SONGS FROM THE BOTTOM OF A WELL

DAEVID ALLEN

LP

1971 *Banana Moon*	BYG 529 345 (Fra)
1976 *Good Morning*	Virgin 2054 (UK)

see also Gong, Soft Machine

DAVID BEDFORD

CD

1972 *Nurses Song with Elephants*	Passport IMP 1008

LP

1974 *Stars End*	Virgin VR13 114

see also Mike Oldfield

TIM BLAKE

CDs

1978 *New Jerusalem*	Mantra 068 (FRa)
1979 *Crystal Machine*	Mantra 067 (Fra)
1991 *Magick*	Voiceprint 105 (UK)

see also Clearlight Symphony (c7), Gong, Steve Hillage, Paragong, Sphinx (c7)

GONG

CDs/LPs

1969 *Magick Brother*	Decal 31 (UK)
1971 *Camembert Electrique*	Decal 64 (UK)
1972 *Flying Teapot*	Decal 67 (UK)
1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists)	Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)
1973 *Angel's Egg*	Caroline 1662
1975 *You*	Caroline 1664
1977 *Live Etc* (odds compilation)	Caroline 1661
1989 *The Mystery & The History of* (odds) (UK)	Thunderbolt TB116
1990 *Live in Paris Bataclan 1973*	Mantra 025 (Fra)
1990 *Live at Sheffield 1974*	Mantra 042 (Fra)

LPs

1971 *Continental Circus*	Philips 633 2003 (Fra)
1973 *Greasy Truckers v2* (various artists)	Island GT 4997 (UK)

see also Daevid Allen, Tim Blake, Dashiel Hedayet, Steve Hillage, Paragong

DASHIEL HEDAYET

CD

1971 *Obsolete*	Mantra 075 (Fra)

see also Gong

STEVE HILLAGE

CDs

1975 *Fish Rising*	Caroline 1800
1976 *L*	Caroline 1801
1977 *Motivation Radio*	Caroline 1802
1978 *Green*	Caroline 1670
1979 *Rainbow Dome Music*	Caroline 1803
1979 *Live Herald*	Caroline 1671
1983 *Aura* (compilation)	Aura 1
1992 *Radio 1 Live in Concert* (1976/79)	Windsong WINCD 014 (UK)

see also Tim Blake, Clearlight Symphony (c7), Gong, Khan, Orb (c8), Paragong, 777 (c8), Sphinx (c7), Uriel

KHAN

CD

1972 *Space Shanties*	Mantra 034 (Fra)

see also Steve Hillage

MIKE OLDFIELD

CDs

1973 *Tubular Bells*	Virgin V286007
1974 *Hergest Ridge*	Virgin V286008
1975 *Ommadawn*	Virgin V286695
1993 *Elements* (4CD Best of 1973-93)	Virgin MO39089

see also David Bedford

PARAGONG

LP

1975 *V* (various artists)	Virgin VD 2505 (UK)

see also Tim Blake, Gong, Steve Hillage

QUIET SUN

LP

1975 *Mainstream*	Antilles 7008

SOFT MACHINE

CDs

1968 *Volume One*	Big Beat CDWIKD 920 (UK)
1989 *Jet Propelled Photograph* (1967 demos)	Decal 197 (UK)
1991 *Peel Sessions*	Strange Fruit SFRCD 201 (UK)

LPs

1977 *Triple Echo* (3LP box)	Har SHTW 801 (UK)

see also Daevid Allen

URIEL

CD

1969 *Arzachel*	TRL 021 (Ger)

see also Steve Hillage

CHAPTER FIVE: MEANWHILE, IN A MUDDY FIELD....

EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND

CDs

1969 *Wasa Wasa*	EMI 791747 (Ger)
1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists)	Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)
1973 *Oorah*	Beat Goes On 114 (UK)
1988 *As Was* (compilation 1969-73)	EMI 90963 (UK) LPs

LP

1970 *Sing Brother Sing*	Harvest SHVL 772 (UK)
1971 *Edgar Broughton Band*	Harvest SHVL 791 (UK)
1972 *Inside out*	Harvest SHTC 252 (UK)

MAN

CDs

1969 *Revelation*	See for Miles SEE 274 (UK)
1969 *2oz of Plastic...*	See for Miles SEE 273 (UK)
1991 *Perfect Timing* (best of 1970-75)	EMI CDEMS 1403 (UK)
1992 *The Early Years* (best of 1969-70)	Griffin/Dojo EARL 10

LPs

1970 *Man*	Liberty LBG 9803
1971 *Do You Like It Here...*	Liberty 1032
1972 *Live at the Padgett Rooms, Penarth*	UA USP 100 (UK)
1972 *Greasy Truckers* (various artists)	UA UDX 203/204 (UK)
1973 *Christmas at the Patti* (various artists)	UA UDX205 (UK)

MIGHTY BABY

CD

1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists) — Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)

LPs

1969 *Mighty Baby* — Head 025
1971 *A Jug of Love* — Blue Horizon 2931001 (UK)

SKIN ALLEY

CDs

1972 *Glastonbury Fayre* (various artists) — Buccaneer BUC 029 (It)
1972 *Two Quid Deal* — Line 00751 (Ger)
1973 *Skin Tight* — Line 00754 (Ger)

LPs

1969 *Skin Alley* — CBS 63847 (UK)
1970 *To Pagham & Beyond* — CBS 64140 (UK)

see also Hawkwind (c1)

UFO

CDs

1971 *UFO 1* — Line 00691 (Ger)
1972 *Flying* — Line 00694 (Ger)
19 *Space Metal* (best of 1971-72) — Line 00704 (Ger)

see also Pink Fairies (c1)

CHAPTER SIX: CROSSING THE RHINE

AMON DÜÜL

LPs

1969 *Psychedelic Underground* — Metronome 15332 (Ger)
1969 *Collapsing - Singvogel Ruckwarts* — Metronome 012 (Ger)
1969 *Paradieswarts Duul* — Ohr 56008 (Ger)
1971 *Disaster - Luud Noma* — BASF 2929079/4 (Ger)

see also Amon Düül II

AMON DÜÜL II

CDs

1969 *Phallus Dei* — EFA 14945 (Ger)
1970 *Yeti* — EFA 14946 (Ger)
1971 *Dance of the Lemmings* — EFA 14947 (Ger)
1972 *Carnival in Babylon* — Mantra 063 (Fra)
1972 *Wolf City* — EFA 14948 (Ger)
1973 *Viva la Trance* — Mantra 062 (FRa)
1992 *BBC Radio 1 in Concert* — Windsong WINCD026 (UK)

LP

1974 *Live in London*	UA USP 102

see also Amon Duul, Hawkwind (c1)

ASH RA TEMPEL

CDs

1971 *Ash Ra Tempel*	Ohr OMM 556013 (Ger)
1973 *Join Inn*	Ohr OMM 556032 (Ger)

see also Klaus Schulze, Tangerine Dream

CAN

CDs

1969 *Monster Movie*	Spoon 004 (Ger)
1970 *Soundtracks*	Spoon 005 (Ger)
1971 *Tago Mago*	Spoon 006 (Ger)
1972 *Ege Bamyasi*	Spoon 008 (Ger)
1973 *Future Days*	Spoon 009 (Ger)
1974 *Soon Over Babaluma*	Spoon 10 (Ger)
1975 *Landed*	Spoon 25 (Ger)
1978 *Cannibalism I* (compilation 1968-73)	Spoon 001 (Ger)
1981 *Delay 1968* (early demos)	Spoon 12 (Ger)
1992 *Cannibalism 2* (compilation 1974-81)	Spoon 21 (Ger)

FAUST

CDs

1971 *Faust*	Polydor 2155 (Jap)
1973 *Faust Tapes*	Polygram RERF2 (UK)
1973 *Faust IV*	
1991 *71 Minutes of Faust* (compilation)	Polygram RERF1 (UK)

LPs

1972 *So Far*	Polydor 2310 196 (UK)
1973 *Outside Dream Syndicate*	Caroline C1501 (UK)

EDGAR FROESE

CDs

1974 *Aqua*	Virgin 1624
1975 *Epsilon in Malaysian Pale*	Caroline 1625

see also Tangerine Dream

KRAFTWERK

CDs

1974 *Autobahn*	Elektra 25326
1975 *Radio-activity*	Cleopatra 5875
1977 *Trans-Europe Express*	Cleopatra 5876

1978 *The Man Machine*	Cleopatra 5877
1992 *The Model* (best of 1975-78)	Cleopatra 5761

LPs

1971 *Kraftwerk*	Philips 6305 058 (Ger)
1972 *Kraftwerk II*	Philips 6305 117 (Ger)
1973 *Ralf & Florian*	Vertigo 6360 616 (UK)
1975 *Exceller 8* (best of 1971-74)	Vertigo 6360 629 (UK)

see also Neu!, Organisation

NEU!

LPs

1972 *Neu!*	Billingate 1001
1973 *Neu! 2*	UA UAS 29500 (UK)
1975 *Neu! 75*	UA UAS 29782 (UK)

see also Kraftwerk

ORGANISATION

LP

1970 *Tone Float*	RCA SF 8111 (UK)

see also Kraftwerk

POPOL VUH

Florian Fricke: "I don't know precisely which Popol Vuh records have been released in the USA. Altogether, there have been more than 20 LPs/CDs by the band - these are the ones I would recommend."

CDs

1972 *In den Garten Pharos*	Kuckuck 008/9 (Ger)
1973 *Hosianna Mantra*	Galaxis 9018 (Ger)
1993 *For You and Me*	Milan 35615
1993 *Best of Popol Vuh/Werner Herzog* (soundtracks)	Milan 35639
1993 *Sing, for Song Drives Away the Wolves*	Milan 35655
1994 City Raga	Milan 35685

LPs

1970 *Affenstunde*	Liberty 83460 (Ger)
1978 *Bruder des Schattens*	Brain 0060167 (Ger)
1981 *Sei Still, Wisse Ich Bin*	IC 80007 (Ger)

KLAUS SCHULZE

CDs

1972 *Irrlicht*	Brain 833 127 (Ger)
1973 *Cyborg*	Brain 2/1078 (Ger)
1974 *Blackdance*	Caroline 2003
1975 *Timewind*	Caroline 2006
1975 *Picture Music* (recorded 1973)	Magnum CDTL002 (UK)

1994 *The Essential 72-93* (best of) Caroline 1896

LP

1972 *Kosmische Musik* (various artists) Ohr OMM 2/56027 (Ger)

see also Ash Ra Tempel, Tangerine Dream

TANGERINE DREAM

CDs

1970 *Electronic Meditation* Relativity 8068
1971 *Alpha Centauri* Relativity 8069
1972 *Zeit* Relativity 8070
1972 *Atem* Relativity 8071
1974 *Phaedra* Atlantic 90933
1975 *Rubycon* Atlantic 91009
1976 *Ricochet* Atlantic 90932

see also Ash Ra Tempel, Edgar Froese, Klaus Schulze

CHAPTER SEVEN: UNCLE HARRY'S LAST FREAK OUT

CLEARLIGHT SYMPHONY

CD/LP

1975 *Clearlight Symphony* Virgin VJD 5024 Jap)

see also Tim Blake (c4), Steve Hillage (c4)

DEL DETTMAR / MELODIC ENERGY COMMISSION

LPs

Stranger in Mystery Energy NRG 111 (Can)
Migration of the Snails Energy NRG 121 (Can)

see also Hawkwind (c1)

(BRIAN) ENO

CDs

1975 *Another Green World* Caroline 1512
1979 *Music for Airports* Caroline 1516
1983 *Apollo - Atmospheres & Soundtracks* EG/Caroline 1514
1994 *Brian Eno: I* (4CD instrumental best of) Virgin ENOBX 1

see also Fripp & Eno

(ROBERT) FRIPP & (BRIAN) ENO

CDs/LPs

1973 *No Pussyfooting* EG/Caroline CD2
1975 *Evening Star* EG/Caroline CD5
1994 *The Essential Fripp & Eno* Caroline 1886

see also Eno

MICHAEL MOORCOCK

LP

1975 *New World's Fair* — UA UAG 29732 (UK)

see also Hawkwind (c1)

RAMASES

CD

1972 *Space Hymns* — Repertoire 4108 (Ger)

LP

1975 *Glass Top Coffin* — Vertigo 6360 115 (UK)

SPHINX

LP

1978 *Xitintoday* — Charisma CDS4011 (UK)

see also Tim Blake (c4), Hawkwind (c1), Steve Hillage (c4), Nik Turner (c8)

CHAPTER EIGHT: A NEW JERUSALEM

ALIEN SEX FIEND

CDs

1984 *Acid Bath* — Anagram GRAM 18 (UK)
1988 *Another Planet* — Anagram GRAM 38 (UK)
1990 *Curse* — Sinclair 1005

CHROME

CDs

1978 *Alien Soundtracks* — Touch & Go 58
1979 *Half Machine Lip Moves* — Touch & Go 58
1980 *Red Exposure* — Dossier EFA 07493
(Ger)
1981 *Blood on the Moon* — Dossier EFA 7490 (UK)
1984 *Chronicles* — Dossier EFA 7499 (UK)
1984 *Into the Eyes of the Zombie King* — Dossier DCD 9004 (UK)
1985 *Lyons Concert* — Dossier DCD 9001 (UK)
1986 *Another World* — Dossier DCD 9002 (UK)

see also Nik Turner

HELIOS CREED

CD

1994 *Busting Through The Van Allan Belt* — Cleopatra 4652

COIL

CDs

1984 *How To Destroy Angels*	Threshold House LOCI CD5
1984 *Scatology*	Force & Form Ffk CD1
1987 *Horse Rotorvator*	Rota Cd1
1990 *Unnatural History*	Threshold House LOCI CD2
1988 *Hellraiser Themes*	Torso Torso CD161
1988 *Gold Is The Metal*	Threshold House LOCI CD1
Aqua Regis	Wax Trax Wax 013
Windowpane	Wax Trax Wax 9140
1991 *Loves Secret Domain*	Wax Trax Wax 7134
1992 *The Snow EP*	Wax Trax Wax 8644

DELIRIUM

CDs

Faces Forms And Illusions	Dossier DCD 9008
Morpheus	Dossier DCD 9010
Svrophenikan	Dossier DCD 9015
Stone Tower	Dossier DCD 9024
Spiritual Archives	Dossier DCD 9033
Euphoric	Third Mind TMD 9262
Spheres	Dossier DCD 9053

THE LEGENDARY PINK DOTS

CDs

1987 *Stone Circles* (best of 1981-87)	Play It Again Sam 1
1987 *Any Day Now*	Play It Again Sam
1988 *The Golden Age*	Play It Again Sam 17
1990 *The Crushed Velvet Apocalypse*	Play It Again Sam 149
1991 *The Maria Dimension*	Play It Again Sam 184 (UK)
1994 *9 Lives To Wonder*	Play It Again Sam 280

see also Teargarden

THE ORB

CDs

1991 *Adventures Beyond the Underworld*	Big Life BLR 05 (UK)
1991 *The Aubrey Mixes*	Big Life 14 (UK)
1992 *UFOrb*	Big Life 18 (UK)
1993 *Orb Live*	Island 8022 (UK)

see also Steve Hillage (c4), 777

OZRIC TENTACLES

CDs/LPs

1983 *Erpsongs*	Dovetail (UK)

1985 *Tantric Obstacles*	Dovetail (UK)
1986 *Live Ethereal Cereal*	Dovetail (UK)
1987 *There is Nothing*	Dovetail (UK)
1988 *Sliding Gliding Worlds*	Dovetail (UK)
1989 *Bits Between the Bits* (odds comp)	Dovetail (UK)
1990 *Erpland*	Dovetail DOVE 1 (UK)
1991 *Pungent Effulgent*	Dovetail DOVE 2 (UK)
1991 *Strangeitude*	IRS 13215
1993 *Jurassic Shift*	IRS 13236
1994 *Arborescence*	IRS

PRESSUREHED

CDs

1993 *Infadrone*	Cleopatra 7312
1994 *Sudden Vertigo*	Cleopatra 1017

see also Nik Turner

SKY CRIES MARY

CDs

1991 *Exit at the Axis*	World Domination 98779
1993 *2000 Light Years from Home EP*	World Domination 79640
1993 *A Return to the Inner Experience*	World Domination 80136
1994 *This Timeless Turning*	World Domination 0018

777

CD

1991 *777*	Caroline 1727

see also Steve Hillage (c4), the Orb

TEARGARDEN

CD

1987 *Tired Eyes Burning Slowly*	Nettwerk 34

see also Legendary Pink Dots

NIK TURNER

CDs

1993 *Sphynx*	Cleopatra 2135
1994 *Prophets of Time*	Cleopatra 6908

see also Chrome, Hawkwind (c1), Pressurehed, Sphynx (c8),

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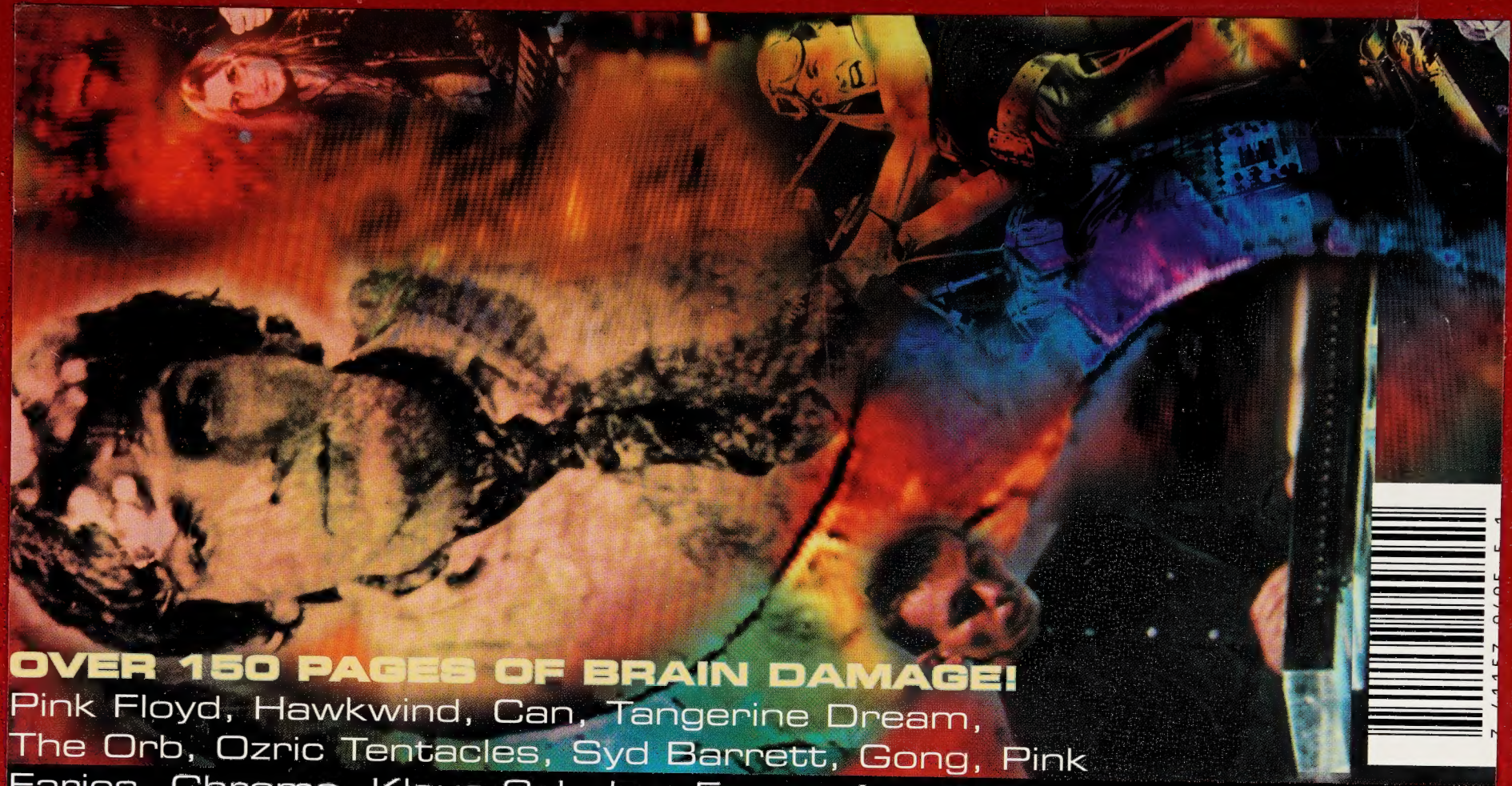

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